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Students' perceptions of power dynamics in an international school implementing the International Baccalaureate
Making meaning of the culture of power

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**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF POWER DYNAMICS IN INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE:
MAKING MEANING OF THE CULTURE OF POWER**

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Thesis done under the supervision of Dr Jenny Driscoll and Professor Alan Cribb

Submission in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an EdD.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses how international school students who are preparing an International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme perceive power dynamics across the main sub-systems that constitute their schools (students, staff, and parents), and how they respond to these perceptions. The expression of the students' perception of power is then used as an indicator of the functioning of the schools' system: its coherence, its incongruences, its rich points, and its areas for improvement. Eighteen 16 and 17 year old students from two international schools, one each in the USA and in France, were interviewed. Nine members of staff from both schools were also interviewed to provide background and referential information. Students were asked to share their perceptions of power, focusing on power dynamics occurring around concrete situations such as homework processes, communication, and management of time and space. Thematic analysis was used for this study, and several themes emerged from the initial framework. Students expressed: feeling school and parental pressure; a desire for more autonomy of learning; a wish for a bigger voice; and wanting less control by parents and teachers and fewer 'arbitrary' exercises of power by staff members. Students were able to identify hierarchical power levels and positions of authority and were accepting of those power differentials. They demonstrated being able to resist and strategize when facing exercises of power and through that process empower themselves.

Following a postmodern systemic theoretical framework, and informed by the literature on international schools' characteristics, student voice, Bourdieu's notion of capital (1986), Hall & Hall (1987), Hofstede *et al*'s (2010) cultural dimensions, and by the literature on power, especially Foucault's notions of power (1980, 1982, 1975/1995), I suggest that the nature and context of international schools 'collude and collide' with the IB philosophy to impact the power relations at play in the schools, and generate a *culture of power* specific to international schools. This thesis concludes with how members of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) and the ISc communities can make meaning of the ISc/IB *culture of power* and become agents of change and growth towards more parental and student empowerment. Finally, the ISc sector as a whole might re-evaluate and reform their policies to facilitate a better congruence between their own educational mission and the idiosyncrasies of an international school.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND RATIONALE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

International schools have a dual educational and business agenda: Responding to the educational, socio-cultural, socio-economic and emotional needs of transient and local families, whilst securing a solid financial base (Leclerc, 2015). Congruent with this dual goal, international schools that implement any or all of the IB programmes view themselves as institutions which contribute to shaping life-long learners who will become experienced contributors to the development of a complex global world. This study took place in two international schools, the French-American School of Sutton (FASS) in the USA, and the Braville International School of France (BISF), both pseudonyms. Each school has opted for the IB Programme as one of the educational tools that helps them develop in students the skills, competencies, and mindset necessary to fulfil their international mission¹.

During my years as an international school counsellor, I noted that the coalescence of the IB and nature of ISc creates a unique educational context generating power dynamics between students, parents, and school staff. More so, it made me curious about how such a paradoxical ‘open-to-the-world’, yet self-contained institution that is an international school, could generate unique power dynamics. This study intends to examine those power dynamics and analyse whether they are consistent with the IB philosophy itself. I believe that these dynamics may convey the need to revisit the specificity of the duality ISc/IB, revealing the necessity to question whether the nature of an ISc might mitigate and encroach on the philosophy of the IB, and reciprocally, leading to the re-evaluation of the schools’ internal practices and policies. More importantly, these dynamics need to be acknowledged and grasped in their globality in order to (re)conceptualise an international school’s identity and concurrently develop a clear vision of the teaching/learning pedagogy schools seek to implement.

¹ The schools’ missions encompass concepts such as: educating lifelong learners, speaking several languages and learning to confront a world of complexity

Pedagogical decisions and constructs are usually developed and enforced by school management, expected to be supported and implemented by teachers, condoned and supported by parents, and expected to be performed by students.

However, the 'school-family' partnership may be dependent on the family's knowledge of the school system. Many international school families move from one international system to another and have some understanding of the international systems and programmes, and have their own representation of the school system. This may be the case for children attending one of over 4000 schools worldwide preparing an IB programme (IBO, 2005). Moving from one ISc to another may not necessarily mean though that parents will have experienced the same ISc philosophy (Hayden, 2006) in previous schools. Many others may not know the system or have a limited knowledge of it, hence would probably not have the 'cultural language' to fully access it. Parents may not be proficient in English, and their children would be more exposed than their parents to the English language, should the latter not be the language of the host country. One can wonder therefore whether their child would be in a position to gain knowledge of the system faster and more accurately than the parents, which could potentially be disempowering for some parents and empowering for the children. At the same time, some parents are eager to monitor their child's schooling as well as they can for a multitude of reasons, referred to in other sections of this paper.

There is therefore a situation where parents are intent on being involved in their children's education, yet do not possess all the necessary tools to do so. It can lead to situations where students sometimes feel too closely monitored by their parents, or not enough, and subsequently may feel under parental and academic pressure. In contrast, other parents feel disengaged due to that lack of, or reduced knowledge of, the school structure, or because they are busy with their new positions and their travels abroad; or yet again because they might feel culturally and linguistically detached. Consequently, many rely and depend either on the school system itself, parents' associations (PTA) or on their own children to be better informed and cope with educational matters and issues. The impact of these contextual factors on the relationship between parents, students and school sub-systems made me question power dynamics and other influential factors whether they be academic, relational, generational, socio-cultural, or otherwise.

It is necessary at this point to shed light on the notion of systems and sub-systems, and on the theoretical framework I am using in this paper.

Systemic thinking originally comes from the sciences (Plas, 1986) and its application to Psychology initially takes its roots in the first half of the twentieth century from Gestalt, Field and Transactional theories (Dowling & Osborne, 1985/1994). A system refers to a global systemic organization in which its internal components seek an equilibrium. A system is more about a homeostatic dynamic than a static state (Plas, 1986). It is an entity, a whole, composed of interdependent parts which interact with and influence one another (Ackoff, 1960; Ackoff, 1999; Dallos & Draper, 2005; Dowling & Osborne, 1985/1994). In this paper, I follow a systemic approach, in that any part of the schools' systems influences, and is influenced by, the others, and reciprocally is in a constant state of flux. By 'any part', I mostly refer here to the main sub-systems: parents, staff and students.

Systems were traditionally understood through a modernist perspective, a view that tends to conceptualize systems/organizations as 'environment-free' or, at most, with limited "awareness for the interconnectedness and mutually constitutive relationship between system and environment" (Montuori & Purser, 1996, p. 191). Such a modernist view highlights hierarchies in that the bodies that control the system possess and maintain power over 'others', which consequently become excluded from the controlling system.

Postmodernists such as Lyotard (1979) were critical of systemic thinking which they viewed as totalizing and promoting knowledge as instrumental in controlling the system (Montuori & Purser, 1996). Postmodern thinking questions the instrumentality of knowledge by systems to obtain and maintain power. Sackney, Walker and Mitchell (1999, p.18) underlined the paradoxes that postmodernists alert us about, such as "a world of fragmentation and disintegration; of wholeness and interdependence, of chaos and uncertainty; of symmetry and pattern; of multiplicity and complexity; of relationship and process; and of connection and [...] simplicity". Montuori and Purser (1996) suggested that postmodernism is actually helpful in understanding power relations within a systemic organization, for it introduces the concept of an 'open system' (Katz and Kahn, 1969), embedded in a larger ecosystem, and through which the system and the environment are connected through space, time, and knowledge. Postmodernists also question the rationality, predictability and controllability of both people and organisations (Sackney, Walker, & Mitchell, 1999); they conceptualize

power as shifting and omnipresent, and located in ‘the relationship’ between individuals (Sackney, Walker, & Mitchell, 1999), rather than being attached to the person.

I view power relations from a postmodern systemic approach, where the power relations between the sub-systems are non-linear and flexible, and in which the boundaries of the interfaces staff-students-parents are blurred, complex and subjective. The terminology ‘blurred boundaries’ is used here understanding that the boundaries in question may be either deliberately or unintentionally ‘blurred’ by the three main school community sub-systems, parents, staff and students.

By ‘school community’, I refer to the school system which includes all individuals and groups that constitute the whole school (students, faculty and staff and parents) - whether it be at FASS or BISF. It emphasizes the sense of familiarity and belonging often present in international schools. The meaning of the term ‘community’ does not refer to the ‘*international school community*’ (as in ‘all constituents of all international schools’)². It does not either refer to the local ‘community’ that ISc often try to establish links with (Allen, 2000), or the IB component of ‘service to the community’ (IBO, 2005-2019).

It is also important to clarify my own positionality in relation to the school community. I am a French native White female and have been a school counsellor and/or school counselling psychologist in international schools during the last 13 years. Being French, I have a connection to some degree with the staff and student populations in both schools. I also have personal experience as a non-working expatriate spouse and mother in several countries, as well as experience in attending and working in under-privileged urban state schools in France and England. My interest in power relations is therefore driven by life-shaping personal and professional experiences. Using self-as-instrument in research - and in psychological interpretations - can be enriching. Yet, as Bourke (2014, p.2) noted, “[t]he concept of self as research instrument reflects the likelihood that the researcher’s own subjectivity will come to bear on the research project and any subsequent reporting of findings”. The researcher thus needs to be aware of the impact of their own positionality on the interactions they may have with participants (Bourke, 2014; England, 1994; Manohar, Liamputtong, Bhole, Arora, 2017). This is especially true in the case of young participants who may perceive their own position within a rapport of the ‘powerless vs powerful’ vis-à-vis the researcher whilst being interviewed about power. This may be the case in my study with students

² <https://www.internationalschoolcommunity.com/home>

being interviewed by myself (the counsellor), as they would, for example, attach symbolic and imagined representations to my role and positionality. I develop this further and in context in the Ethics section of Chapter Three (Methodology), with regards to the limitations and strengths of my own positionality.

1.2 CHAPTERS

This chapter, Chapter One, defines the aims and the rationale of the study. The following chapters are divided in the following way: Chapter Two reviews the literature on the two overarching domains of the paper, in order to provide conceptual frames of reference prior to the analysis of the data. My first focus is on the literature which addresses the specific domains related to the context and nature of international schools, such as examining the nature of an ISc; the IB philosophy and especially the Learner Profile fostering independent study skills; parental involvement; and the socio-economic and socio-cultural contexts inherent to international schools. My second focus addresses different frameworks and concepts of power, including power in international schools. Chapter Three presents the methodology and ethical issues. Chapter Four analyses the findings of the empirical data from the staff interviews. Chapter Five reports and analyses the data drawn from the students' interviews. Chapter Six examines the students' reactions and responses to power dynamics; and finally, I discuss the findings in Chapter Seven.

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Aims

The aim of this research is to explore students' experience and perceptions of power dynamics occurring across the main constituencies of an international school and to examine how students resist, navigate, negotiate, and struggle through these experiences. The expression of a student's perception of power may be an indicator, or a marker, of the functioning of a system: its coherence, its incongruences, its rich points, and its areas for improvement. Ultimately, I am interested in exploring how the school community and educational policy-makers can make meaning of these students' perceptions of power.

1.3.2 Objectives

I have chosen four interdependent objectives to shed light on the students' perceptions of power dynamics. The first objective is to illuminate how the IB philosophy and in particular the Learner Profile (which embodies the philosophy of the programme) plays into the power dynamics between students, members of staff, and parents. The second objective is to map out the characteristics of both international schools, inclusive of their commonalities and differences, and how they impact the students' school and personal lives. The third objective of the study is to describe and analyse how students perceive authority and power legitimacy, and how they experience and perceive power differentials between different constituencies. The fourth and last objective is to shed light on how students respond to, and navigate through, power relations.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

The rationale for this study lay in filling a gap in the international school literature and more specifically in the literature about power relations in international schools. What I felt was pertinent was to pay attention to the students' expression of their own feelings in the 'Gestalt' of their life story and more specifically, of their school story, embracing the interconnectedness of all the elements that produce power differentials. Students' experiences convey a multiplicity of meanings and discourses that are at play in an international school, such as the implementation of the IB philosophy, the psychodynamic relations between students and adults, or the specificities of an expatriate and multicultural world. These experiences have seldom, if ever, been studied and at least three sectors of research in relation to students' perceptions in an ISc can benefit from this study: student voice in research, educational needs, practices and policies, and the role of parents in the IB education of their child.

1.4.1 Student Voice In Research

Children's participation in educational research is now recognized as the most pertinent way to conduct research *about* children, and about student agency (Grover, 2004; Biddulph, 2011; Bourke & Loveridge, 2013; Graham, Simmons & Truscott, 2017). Nevertheless, few studies have involved students as participants in research about their own power in school, and more specifically in international schools. For instance, Caffyn's study on micro-power dynamics in an international school (2011) is mostly

based on case studies of parents and teachers. Rare are the studies on student voice in international schools, such as Skene (2016), who studied student voice and the IB curriculum.

Studies have more so focused on teachers' and parents' perspectives, such as Lightfoot (2004), who studied the meaning of parental involvement in urban schools from teachers' perspectives; the latter reported that middle-school parents may be "*too much*" (p.98) involved in their children's education, that is too 'pushy', too controlling. Not hearing these perceptions in the field of research disregards the input and contribution of a major constituency of the school community.

My concern, thus, was that pedagogical decisions that primarily concern students' perspectives on learning are seldom taking students' voices into account. This is not only the case in research, or on the ethics of research, but also in policies, as underlined by Males, Kusevic and Siranovic (2014) who plead for a respect of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) towards the improvement of school policies. The UNCRC has been ratified by France, as well as all member states except for the USA (OHCHR, 1996-2018b). In Appendix A, I include a section of Article 12 of the UNCRC (OHCHR, 1996-2018a) with regards to respecting the right of the child to be heard, and from Article 13, a section about freedom of expression: "When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account". [...] (Unicef, 2014).

Article 3 of the Convention says that state parties must ensure that institutions, parents and guardians have the responsibility for the well-being of the child. Articles 5 and 12 suggest that state parties need to take into account children's development and evolving capacity to exercise judgment and express their views in matters that affect them as they reach sufficient age and maturity.

Edwards and Alldred's (2000) research with inner-city and suburban students from diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds showed that children do have a clear opinion about their parents' involvement with school matters and boundaries between parents and school. They do not necessarily perceive a close relationship between their school and their parents as something positive or beneficial. Indeed, they perceive it as a possible intrusion into their private lives. In a prior paper (2015), I interviewed students as well as parents, teachers, and administrative staff, for the purpose of a study on parental involvement as a coping strategy in international schools. I was thus curious to hear solely the students' perceptions of parental involvement. However,

ethical limitations such as ones related to my positionality as a counsellor and to the choice of the topic – power - might colour the relationship between the participant and the researcher and potentially have an influence on the data. This underlines the sensitivity and challenges attached to using children as research participants.

This study can contribute to the literature on ISc children's perceptions of power on at least two levels. It can illuminate the debates on the place of pedagogy in the IB programme and its practical implementation (culture of learning, student voice, autonomy of learning), and on the relationship between parental involvement in children's school life and power.

1.4.2 Educational Needs, Practices And Policies

Front-line staff, pastoral/well-being faculty, school counsellors and psychologists, and administrators would clearly benefit from gaining insight into how students perceive power relations in their schools. It would facilitate a better insight into communication processes and cross-cultural relationships. Ultimately, it would inform school staff on how to not only respond better to students' well-being, developmental, psychological and learning needs, but also on how to improve the school's performance and pedagogy. As Dunlap and Goldman (1991) wrote, "thinking of power only as authoritative and coercive unnecessarily limits our ability to describe how power is exercised in today's schools" (p.25); and it would limit administrators' ability to provide adequate and democratic management of power in order to benefit students' well-being and learning. Policy-makers have sought to produce an international curriculum that endeavours to respond to global challenges and to produce new generations of students better equipped with independent, critical, creative thinking skills, open to global citizenship, and promoters and guardians of a peaceful planet. This appears to be a noble objective, reaching out to families interested in such an educational philosophy and able to enrol their children in a private education. The IBO targets mobile families, and schools implementing the IB programmes target values that are valued by parents, such as humanistic values (IBO, 2013-2015). However, whilst the IBO responds to families' needs, the IB programmes are *student-centred*, i.e. they place the student at the core of the learning and help students develop as cooperative and independent learners. There is little space given to 'the whole family' in the IB programmes, except for informative purposes.

Part of this study intends to shed light on some areas of tension between parents (who have their own dreams, expectations and parenting values) and students (who develop inquiring, communicative, and reflective, independent learning skills). The study could therefore contribute to the IBO and schools revisiting their policies by taking international schools' family contexts into consideration. There is, finally, very little literature, if any, on students' perceptions of the IB learning philosophy and how it interacts with the local system - that is, the international school itself, with all of its members; and there is minimal literature on students' perceptions of the power processes through which students develop as learners.

1.4.3 Parental Involvement

There has been no shortage of literature on PI in mainstream, national schools over the last few decades, whether it be on the benefits and relevance of PI on children's performance (Epstein, 1985; Fan & Chen, 2001; El Nokali, Bachman & Votruba-Drzal, 2010); PI and socio-economic/socio-cultural class (Vincent, 1996; Lareau, 1987, 2000; Bakker, Denessen and Brus-Laeven, 2007); PI and homework (Cooper, Lindsay & Nye, 2000; Solomon, Warin & Lewis, 2002; Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, Whetsel, & Green, 2004; Forsberg, 2007; Hutchison, 2012); and values, beliefs and processes of PI (Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Walker, Shenker & Hoover-Dempsey, 2010; Kremer-Sadlik & Fatigante, 2015). However, there is a paucity of literature on students' perceptions of power relations linked to parental involvement in international schools. Thus there is relevance to highlighting parental power, for policy-writers and educationalists need to take into account all elements which have the potential capacity to influence -or disrupt- the implementation of policies. This study would therefore fill a gap in the literature.

Throughout their educational careers, teachers and counsellors often come across situations where they might question the ethics, the pertinence, and the pedagogy of fostering parents' involvement in their children's school-based education. An international context adds emotional, cultural, and transient parameters to the parents' narratives and the ways in which they approach their children's schooling. Parents have their own educational values as well as their own life stories that help explain their choice of school for their child. These values and life stories also account for why they do, or do not, for example, get involved in their child's education in various ways:

asking their child about homework; helping him/her with homework; encouraging him/her to be independent; participating in school activities; communicating in various ways with teachers and administrative staff; accompanying students on trips; being part of the Board or the PTA. Children might feel that their parents are over-involved, under-involved, or just rightly involved.

Independently, the school has, for example, its own educational philosophy that explains why and how members of staff distribute, promote and assess homework. It also (partly) explains the way the school communicates with parents. As part of the IB teaching/learning experience, students are encouraged to develop independent study skills (Appendices E and F). However, how congruent and compatible is this with the narratives of families experiencing, for instance, an expatriate move, which I have suggested have an effect on PI (Leclerc, 2015)?

As students accomplish homework (or not), do the school and parents ‘collude or collide’ in any way, and for whose benefit, or loss? Where do students locate themselves, and fit in, during this process? Are students fully aware of all the dynamics taking place between the school and their parents? I believe it to be important to help shed light on any contradictions that students might feel between specific educational approaches and their family narratives; or between educational approaches and their own narratives as teenagers. Shedding light on these dynamics would help educators obtain a better understanding of, and insight into, home-school relationships appropriate to an international school context. Subsequently, educators and policy-makers would be better informed to contribute, on a micro-level, to the development of educational practice and, on a meso-level, to the developmental of educational policies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This review is driven by my postmodern systemic theoretical framework and supports the objectives of this paper. The first section, “International Schools”, sheds light on the different components, concept and nature of an international school to provide a systemic context to the data. The second section, “Power”, examines a conceptual evolution of the notion of power.

In the first section, I therefore provide some background on the nature of an international school and on what kind of international schools FASS and BISF are. There is a reference to the teaching language, English, and its impact, to some extent, on power relations. I then detail the specificities of the IB philosophy and programmes with a particular focus on the fostering of students’ autonomy of learning. It is essential to examine the concept of autonomy more closely and to assess whether this is a concept that is relevant in the context of an international school, whether it is formulated differently or understood in a particular way by the members of the community. Autonomy of learning (or otherwise labelled and/or understood) in the context of the IB is often linked to homework completion and general organisational skills, with ‘homework’ becoming a potential vehicle of an expression of power dynamics. In effect, homework completion necessarily implies relationships between students and their teachers, and between students and their parents, hence there exist opportunities for power relations. For this reason, I chose to devote a whole general section of questions during the interviews to ‘homework/independent study’. The use of the term ‘homework’ in this paper is generic and makes reference to any task which needs to be completed independently, or at least with limited guidance and feedback from teachers, and usually done at home. Examples are major tasks counting towards the Diploma such as ‘Internal assessments’ (IA), ‘Extended Essays’ (EE), or the more traditional and shorter homework assessments. I follow with the value and meaning of parental involvement, especially in the context of an international school, and review studies addressing concrete areas of educational processes involving close links between home and school. I particularly address the link between PI and social class, as well as

Bourdieu's concepts of field and forms of capital. These concepts are relevant in such a diverse socio-economic and socio-cultural, multicultural environment, and are pertinent in that the socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of the families may play a role in the parents' involvement in their children's education. I complete the literature review with a perspective on multicultural and socio-cultural literature, because a better understanding of the characteristics of an ISc and its multicultural components is an important component of this study. I present various views of cultural concepts and dimensions, such as (but not exclusively) Hall, E. and Hall, M.'s hidden dimensions (1987), and Hofstede G. *et al.*'s essentialist view of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, G., 1991; Hofstede, G. & Hofstede, G.J., 2005; Fail, 2010; Hofstede, G. Hofstede, G.J. & Minkov, M., 2010).

In the second section, I examine the evolution of the concept of power and on the ideas of power that are relevant to this study. I review literature that addresses power within an educational context, including student voice; then through the lens of an international school system, although there is little literature on this subject. I examine how an international school context may create conditions from which students' personal and learning spaces may be created, assessed, controlled, claimed or reclaimed. I also clarify the notions of authority *versus* power, especially in an educational context. I draw from Foucault's later work on power, and power and subject, to examine the power dynamics in the school between students and the other members of the community. I then cover some of the literature on boundaries. This section homes in on the notion of boundaries between sub-systems, especially examining it through the lens of an international school. The blurring of boundaries could occur as part of a normal educational process inherent to an international school context. It may be perceived as an infringement of students' time and space or as a combination of these. As power relations and power dynamics take place in-between and amongst individuals and groups/sub-systems, this section also addresses the interface and spaces between those sub-systems (students, parents, staff). I include the concepts of time and space, domains in which dynamic forces often come into collusion or collision, and hence are important for the interpretation of perceptions of power relations. At this point, I refer back to Foucault's Panopticon (1975/1995) and its symbolic representation of power. I finally touch upon the force and role of psychodynamics in power relations, still keeping in mind the international school context. However, it is essential to first clarify and define what is, and the concept and nature of, an 'international school'.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

2.2.1 *What Is An International School?*

There is no one-size-fits-all type of international school. There is, globally, an ever-increasing number of international schools (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Brummitt & Keeling, 2013), all with different characteristics, different ethos and different levels of national and international recognition. Clark (2014) refers to an ISc as a school implementing a curriculum other than the curriculum of the host country. According to Clark, there are over 9000 ISCs in the world. There seem to be at least two common denominators in ISCs. First, those schools are private and are totally self-funding (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). The private nature of an ISc is significant, especially in terms of power dynamics, for the family becomes a ‘customer’. Private schools like BISF and FASS have more educational autonomy (and therefore educational power) than national schools, even if FASS does have to follow certain French Ministry directives; however, the counterweight is that parents possess a level of economic power over the school. Caffyn (2013) wrote about the concept of the parents as ‘customers’ and suggested that the international and private nature of the school does have a strong impact on power relations between parents and the school staff: “In an international school parental power can be both political and psychodynamic in that parents as customers demand value for money yet are also affected by issues of identity, vulnerability, and displacement” (p.212). Second, the population is mostly composed of students from outside the host country. Mackenzie, Hayden, and Thompson (2003) showed that parents choose an international school for: the language of instruction, English; the IB programme; and for providing opportunities to access good universities. With regards to ethos, Hayden and Thompson (2013, p.5) defined three discrete types of international schools: “Type A traditional” international schools which mostly cater to the needs of expatriate families; “Type B ideological” international schools that mostly promote international understanding and world peace; and “Type C non-traditional” international schools that seek to provide an English-medium elite education for local families who can afford the fees. Those three different types are not exclusive of one another, and international schools may embrace more than one type. International schools aiming at receiving international recognition and validation may enter a process of accreditation by two collaborating associations, the European CIS

(Council of International Schools) and US NEASC (North-Eastern Association of Schools and Colleges) (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013).

The English language remains the main language of instruction in an ISc. Just over 70% of ISCs use English, or English and the host language, as a language of instruction (Clark, 2014). As Hayden and Thompson pointed out (2013), this raises concerns that an international education is mostly taught using the English language. Most international schools aim at enrolling students from all over the world; yet, students are taught by teachers who first need to be Anglophone (other than mother-tongue teachers) and second, who can legally work or potentially be able to get a local working permit. These limitations can be seen as contradictory to the international school mission. Multicultural diversity and open-mindedness are the visible flagships - and pillars - of an international education. The hegemony of the English language should not detract from that international objective. Robinson and Taylor (2007, p.11) suggest that “if schools are to listen to the whole student body there should not be situations where schools favour those with a language and culture similar to that of the adults within the school”. Robinson and Taylor’s perspective is thus implicitly asking schools to take into account student voice in both their linguistic and conceptual components. The impact is not solely constrained to the hegemony of the English language. As César (2013) suggested, schools need to be attuned to multicultural differences and vigilant about overcoming stereotypes in their teaching practices. One may expect international schools to be professional in that way; yet they must not be too complacent about it. The philosophy behind the teaching and learning in an international school is dependent on many factors, and schools need to be fully aware of these, and in particular of the cultural background as Fail (2010) highlighted:

...It is important to acknowledge that people do share different values, world views, behaviours and traditions according to their background. Although these attitudes and behaviours may result from their social class, socio-economic status, level of education, life experience, family life, religious background, it is important to remember that the context of all these experiences is also their nationality/cultural background (p.103).

Hofstede G. *et al.* (2010) believed that

[t]he chances for successful cultural adaptation are better if the teacher teaches in the students’ language than if the student has to learn in the teacher’s language, because the teacher has more power over the learning situation than any single student (p.393).

A teaching situation such as this (i.e. teaching in the student's native language) is not common practice in an ISc - and quasi-impossible to respect- with the common teaching language being English. However, this statement highlights the power of language, and the usage of power to serve students' needs. The hegemony of the English language has consequences on the communication between non-Anglophone parents and school and, possibly, psychological consequences linked to the dominance of a particular culture/language, whether it be amongst staff members of different nationalities, or amongst the parents' community. If the English language is the language of instruction in most international schools, not all ISCs implement the same educational programme. About 25% of ISCs (Clark, 2014) adopt the International Baccalaureate philosophy and implement at least one of the IB programmes (Primary Years, Middle Years, and Diploma Programmes).

2.2.2 IB Philosophy

The IBO mission statement stipulates that the IB “aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. [...]. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners...” (IBO, 2013-2015, page describing mission statement). Influential educationalists key to the development of the IB philosophy were John Dewey, an American philosopher and psychologist, who believed in exploring students' curiosity; A.S. Neill, the Scottish progressive educator who founded Summerhill School (Neill, 1960, 1995), a school environment free from constraints; Jean Piaget, the Swiss philosopher and psychologist who theorized the connection between children's intelligence and cognitive cycles; and Jerome Bruner, an American psychologist who explored learning through self-discovery (IBO, 2017b).

Both FASS and BISF prepare their students for IB Programmes. The nature of the IB Programme is holistic. It is based on international open-mindedness and rests upon the education of the whole person: Students not only acquire knowledge content but also skills and a set of values (Wilkinson, D. & Wilkinson, V., 2013). As the IB highlights (IBO, 2013-2015), the programme is not solely concerned with the students' cognitive development; it also addresses students' physical and socio-emotional well-being, that is, a holistic education that “centres on learners, (and) develops effective approaches to teaching and learning” (IBO, 2013, p.1). An IB school implements those values

through an education that spans from the Primary years through to the senior years. At Diploma Level (G11 and G12), this student-centred curriculum is supported by a series of structured components such as Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS), and the Extended Essay (EE), - Appendix F. Additionally, all programmes (Primary, Middle and Diploma) commit to the development of attributes in students based on the Learner Profile (Appendix E). In this study, I chose to focus more specifically on the philosophical vision of the LP. The Learner Profile (IBO, 2013) provides teachers with a list of ten attributes that students are introduced to and are taught to develop through activities and the normal teaching process. Ideally, through their IB education, learners become: Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced, Reflective (see Appendix E). The first attribute, '*Inquirers*', concerns how students "nurture [their] curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. [They] know how to learn independently and with others". Students become '*Knowledgeable*' by developing 'conceptual understanding', and become '*Thinkers*' by developing 'critical and creative thinking skills'. Students learn to become good '*Communicators*', expressing themselves confidently, and '*Principled*', taking 'responsibility for [their] actions and their consequences'. Learners strive to be '*Risk-takers*', that is to "work independently and cooperatively, [...] and be resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change". Students become '*Balanced*' learners, that is, balancing their academic development and their well-being, and finally '*Reflective*' students, "consider the world and [their] own ideas and experience". Students grow to be '*Open-minded*' by appreciating their own, and others', cultures, traditions and values. Finally, students develop as respectful and '*Caring*' people (IBO, 2013, unique page).

The IB programmes seek to "help students make informed, reasoned, ethical judgments and develop the flexibility, perseverance and confidence they need in order to bring about meaningful change" (IBO, 2013-2015, p.3). Cambridge (2013) suggested that the Learner Profile could be seen as "an explicit example of the regulative discourse promoted by the IB" (p.191) for both students and teachers. The LP embodies indeed all the theoretical characteristics and attributes that, whilst being theoretical, are the backbone of daily educational practice. I was especially curious to examine the potential links between the LP attributes and independent learning for the potential power dynamics the latter might generate.

2.2.3 *Autonomy Of Learning, Or Independent Learning Skills?*

Examining the construct of autonomy in depth is beyond the scope of this paper; however, whilst there is extensive literature on the concept of autonomy, it is useful to recall at this point a few definitions of the concept of autonomy, and especially of the concept of autonomy of learning, before shedding light on what it means within the framework of the IBO and in the context of an international school.

Wong (2008) asserted that someone is “acting autonomously if [the person] is following [their] own projects, those with which [the person] identifies” (p.3). This definition captures the essence of ‘full’ autonomy in terms of identifying and carrying out the task. Yet it seems to do so outside a pragmatic, educational context. Students need to follow a particular programme that they might abide with, but not design themselves, and for which they get assessed.

One of the main references on autonomy of learning is Holec’s initial and widely accepted definition, albeit in the context of adult language learning, which is the “*ability to take charge of one’s own learning [...] a power or capacity to do something*” (1979/1981, p. 3, author’s italics). Holec’s definition includes the student’s capacity to self-direct, self-regulate and self-evaluate. It is about a learnt ‘capacity’ to take charge of one’s learning happening in the context of a “learning structure in which control over the learning can be exercised by the learner, i.e. in which the learner has the possibility of exercising his ability to take charge” (Holec, 1979/1981, p.7). Dickinson (1993) saw an autonomous learner as having the ability to self-direct (sometimes alongside or cooperatively with the teacher), filtering the meaningful and responsible actions that will serve his learning. For Little (2007), “learner autonomy is the product of an interactive process in which the teacher gradually enlarges the scope of her learners’ autonomy by gradually allowing them more control of the process and content of their learning” (p.26). Key words here are ‘process’ and ‘gradually allowing [learners]’, similar to that of Bruner’s. Bruner (1996), one of the key educationalists who inspired the philosophy of the IB, referred to ‘scaffolding’, as the way to structure students’ learning and to guide them through the development of new skills, both in content and in process. The learning moves back and forth from teacher to student, until the student becomes more independent. Bruner, earlier (1986), had talked about the notion of ‘handover’, the process of handing-over the teaching/learning from teacher to student. However, as Bullock (2011) said, the concept of ‘handover’ also highlights the complexity of the concepts of ‘independence’ or ‘autonomy’: In the ‘handover’ process,

there is necessarily the intervention of the adult, and it may be irrational to surmise that the ‘hand-over’ is ever completed during the course of high school, or is ever completed. Autonomy, in this learning context, is therefore conceived of as both a *skill* and a *process*, and not an innate capacity to take charge of one’s own learning without any external intervention. This is an important point especially when considering students with learning difficulties. The IB education aims at engaging *all* learners and “learning communities [to] become more inclusive as they identify and remove barriers to learning and participation” (IBO, 2013-2015, p.3). This emphasises the need for IB schools to address these needs. Paulsen & Sayeski (2013) and Hen & Goroshit (2014) have underlined that students with learning disabilities have more difficulty with study skills such as management skills (time management, self-management), or cognitive skills (e.g. taking notes). Paulsen & Saveski added that acquiring such skills helps students become independent learners. Meltzer (2018) specifically referred to students with impaired executive functioning skills (such as students with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, and students with Learning Disorders), highlighting that such students may present difficulties in goal setting, planning and organising, and self-regulating and self-monitoring.

Both Dickinson (1993) and Little (1991, 2007) considered autonomy of learning as a process of *learning* how to learn independently. Yet, neither expected teachers to relinquish all control of the students’ learning, nor aim for students’ full autonomy. This approach seems to resonate more closely with the IB philosophy, and in particular with at least two of the LP attributes, ‘Inquirers’ and ‘Risk-Takers’. The IBO lexicon is therefore more focused on ‘independent learning’ than ‘autonomy’. In the next paragraph, I examine literature that addresses the relationship between homework and independent learning skills, bringing into play more specifically IB principles and parental involvement.

2.2.4 Homework

Students were very vocal and confident when making comments about homework. Homework appears to be a motivational and comfortable theme for them to speak about, whether it be during the interviews, or during their school life. Reasons for this could be either because they perceive homework as intrusive; or because this is a process inherent to their school history; or, again, because they disagree on their school’s homework policies (or lack of); or, lastly, because homework can be a recipient of

specific tensions and stresses whether it be in English secondary schools (Solomon, Warin and Lewis, 2002), and/or specifically in ‘privileged’ schools (Galloway, Conner & Pope, 2013).

Homework seems to be at the centre of many debates amongst educational policy-makers and IB educators on the IB Community Blog (IBO, 2017a). We saw earlier that ‘homework’ can be a vehicle of power dynamics. It is also, and often, an enactment for independent study, for students need to possess independent study skills to be able to cope with homework tasks. Students whose independent study skills are impaired (for whatever reason) may struggle in the completion of their homework tasks, and this is when parental intervention may impact (positively or negatively) their child’s learning skills, learner’s autonomy development, and well-being. This issue is therefore a complex one, especially considering the paradoxical pressure that the IB philosophy may induce for students and families. How can schools find the right balance between well-being, pedagogy and their own philosophy? What is the parents’ role? One illustration of conflict over homework is children feeling that their parents are too much ‘on their backs’ - or occasionally not involved enough. This occurrence may come from parents being (overly?) emotionally involved in the success of their child. Or, it may come from a certain parental ambivalence, with parents not quite knowing which stance to take, either being interventionist or handing over the responsibility of decision-taking to their child. Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards (2001) talked about this relational ambivalence between 16-18 year old teenagers and their parents, who, whilst developing more equal and mutual open relationships, still experience “tensions around [...] feelings of responsibility and authority” (p.768), as well as sensitive issues regarding control and the way they communicate. It is worth quoting Forsberg (2007) as he described accurately the parental dilemma between making the child dependent or independent in terms of homework:

Parents discursively construct childhood as not yet being autonomous and responsible about time and school assignments. Consequently, childhood is constructed in terms of dependence and on adult guidance and supervision. The goal for parents is to make children independent, but this independence has to be in line with the parents’ wishes. Thus, children must also learn to take responsibility for their own assignments (p.220).

Homework can be a double-bind for parents. They may feel that the responsibility for their children’s education creates the expectation that their role is to “manage a specific tension between their responsibility and the children’s” (Pontecorvo, Liberati &

Monaco, 2013, p.32). They may also view homework involvement as a chance to “[repair] their own scholastic failures or lost opportunities” (Solomon, Warin & Lewis, 2002, p.603). However, parents may feel that they do not have the necessary skills to support homework processes (Solomon *et al*, 2002). Yet, homework is given by the school to the students, not the parents, and this ambivalence may create friction between parents and children, for parents can be relatively powerless through the process. Pressure due to homework tasks (Solomon *et al*, 2002) can create tensions and distance within families, and subsequently potential damage to learner’s autonomy. However, as Katz, Kaplan and Buzukashvily underlined in a study with Jewish-Israeli children (2011), children are more likely to become autonomously motivated if their own parents have autonomous motivation to get involved in their children’s homework, and experience enjoyment and reduced stress in doing so.

How can schools facilitate or promote independent learning, taking into account students’ well-being and family prerogatives? The debate about how much autonomy one should give children (Pontecorvo *et al.*, 2013) is an important aspect of this study, as it covers both the notion of power and one aspect of the IB philosophy. Not all IB/ISCs assign homework, such as the ACS International School Egham³. In both FASS and BISE, parents are encouraged to support the child’s homework, without being directly involved. The latter can prove to be difficult when the expatriate spouse is not allowed to work; homework then can become a project for the non-working spouse (Leclerc, 2015). Mackenzie *et al.* (2003) studied parental priorities in several Swiss international schools and found that “mothers often focus their time and energies on family and school-related issues while their husbands work in banks, companies and others” (pp.307-308). Of course, this would not exclusively be occurring with mothers, but with any non-working parent, with homework being only one aspect of PI.

2.2.5 Parental Involvement

By ‘parental’ I mean the adjectival function of parents and guardians of all students attending a school. I will sometimes refer to parents and/or guardians solely as ‘parents’ for simplicity. In this international context, I consider as ‘family’ any nuclear group of individuals living together, or who used to live together, and co-habiting within cultural schemas; and either moving together to the USA or France for

³ <https://www.acs-schools.com/homework-waste-of-time> Date posted 15/02/2019

professional reasons, or choosing to attend either of the two schools for personal and particular reasons.

Rose suggested that the modern (mostly Western) family is constantly hypervigilant and preoccupied by its intellectual, social and health adjustment (1999). As per this framework, parents balance their parental rights and duties with their professional responsibilities, and this balancing act can be complex in the case of an expatriate family, highlighting the essential role of PI in the school. This section looks at the literature on PI, targeting the key areas relevant to the study, especially, but not exclusively, in France and in the USA: PI and its relevance in learning; motivational PI; PI and cultural capital; and PI as perceived by the children/students.

Parental Involvement, in the USA, is defined in Section 1118 of the 'No Child Left Behind' – NCLB – legislation (US Dept. of Education, 2001-2002) as:

The participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities including: assisting their child's learning; being actively involved in their child's education at school; serving as full partners in their child's education and being included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committee to assist in the education of their child...

Section 1118 of the NCLB is the first significant law in the USA to define PI and set out clear expectations for parents, schools, and school districts. Parents have traditionally been kept separate from schools and away from the field of the schools' expertise (Vincent, 1996). The relevance of parental involvement started being recognized back in the 1960s with, for example, the Plowden report (Central Advisory Council for Education, England, 1967); John Major's Citizen Charter (UK Parliament, 1991); Section 110 of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (UK Parliament, 1998) which "requires the governing body of every maintained school [...] to adopt a home-school agreement for the school, together with a parental declaration to be used in connection with the school"; the 'NCLB Act' in the USA (US Dept. of Education, 2001-2002); and from the 1970s in France (Dalsheimer-Van Der Tol & Murat, 2011; Poupeau, François & Couratier, 2007). Whilst many studies have recognized the value of the parent-school partnership (such as Christenson, 2003; El Nokali *et al.*, 2010), other studies have not been so conclusive and have raised questions (Bempechat, 2004, Cooper *et al.*, 2000; Solomon *et al.*, 2002). However, with regards to the schools I am studying, the relevance (or non-relevance) of the partnership is experienced by the students at a micro-level, and driven by the reality of the present moment in time. As

Kremer-Sadlik and Fatigante (2015) suggested, parents view the present as key for their child's future, and this creates a "sense of urgency" (p.79).

What does that 'sense of urgency' look like or feel like for the children? Parents of children and youth attending international schools may be motivated to participate in their child's education in various ways and for various reasons. For instance, McLachlan (2007) suggested that expatriate parents develop strategies to help their children transition better when they arrive at their new school abroad. This could be through participating in school activities, being present at school, monitoring the children's homework and so forth. It could nevertheless be argued that these strategies are, for parents and especially the non-working parent, psychologically self-serving to help compensate for significant professional and emotional losses. These emotions and feelings which come up during the whole process of relocation have been examined and studied by practising counsellors and scholars such as Bryson and Hoge (2005), Shahnasarian (1991), Punnett (1997) and Hausman and Reed (1991). Hausman and Reed, for instance, pointed at anger and loss as being the most common emotions taking place and acting as adjustment to relocation, not just for individuals but for the whole family. This is especially salient for the children, who are the 'passive actors' (or powerless partners) in the relocation process with no 'executive' say in the moving decision. This is the case for the non-working spouses as well. Uprooting children from their schools, leaving a well-established support network, and the disruption of the (non-working) spouse's career development all contribute to the stress brought on by relocation. "Anger is likely to increase as individuals perceive a lack of control over the relocation" (Hausman & Reed, p.250), whilst relocation induces a spectrum of losses, such as "day to day contact with friends and family, familiar neighbourhood stores, and easily accessible emotional support" (p.251).

Parents also choose a local international school for other reasons: Students are taught in English, which may be appealing for local families; and the IB serves to help to open doors to high-ranking universities, which is considered an opportunity by most families. Bates (2011) reported that the IBO "has agreements with nearly two thousand universities that the IB Diploma will be accepted as an entry qualification" (p.151). Whether parents are local or expatriate parents, the enrolling of their children in an international school is seen as a long-term investment, and PI in the school is one of the tools to ensure the choice is successful. Hence perhaps the sense of urgency, mentioned above, is supported by the knowledge that parents do all they can to see that their

(financial, educational and emotional) investment is paying off. This kind of 'investment' might not be the sole systemic adaptation taking place in an expatriation context. As Ali, Van der Zee and Sanders (2003) noted, "[i]n terms of family system theory, an overseas assignment is a change which requires the family to restructure, develop, and adapt in response to the demands of the new situation" (p.567).

Does this restructuring require that the concept of power be addressed or implemented?

The data provides some answers to this. It is worth pointing out here the potential impact of the parents' social class. Vincent (1996) argued that social class differences created imbalanced relationships between parents and school staff. She added that a social imbalance between parents and teachers can be addressed by a process of 'empowerment' that is collectively creating a context for change. Vincent proposed therefore that parents can be empowered and be more involved in school decision-making by being more participative in their children's education. In international schools, the disconnection is rarely a socio-cultural disconnection, and the imbalance between the school and parents is possibly more ambiguous. The socio-cultural piece is, however, still a factor of 'parental empowerment', but at a different level, as the data highlights later. In international schools, and in this case at both FASS and BISF, the distribution of parental power is due to several key factors that contribute to creating a different kind of framework of parental power, participation, and involvement: First, the associative and cooperative nature of the schools engage the parents in a significant way. Second, as mentioned earlier, the sense of loss felt by spouses accompanying the working expatriate spouse may be compensated for by the parent's over-engagement in their children's education. Third, the cultural fabric is not cause for discrimination or disconnection, but is a reflection of the nature of the school, with its spectrum of cultural schemas and languages. Lastly, the schools' family population is mostly middle to middle-upper class, and most parents occupy socially dominant professions with high expectations for their children, with a tendency to get very involved in their children's education. One needs, however, to modulate this in terms of economic revenue: Some parents in the diplomatic and bank milieus do not systematically occupy high-rank positions, and a few teachers also have their children enrolled at school. The economic range of the families is therefore reasonably wide.

2.2.6 *The Influence Of The Socio-Cultural Context*

Examining the literature concerning the impact of socio-cultural and socio-economic factors on school dynamics may shed light on practices taking place in school, whether they be automatic, spontaneous, or deliberate. Second, it may illuminate the power relations at play and consequently contribute to understanding the students' perceptions of power, and eventually help in shaping a model of power dynamics.

Lareau (2000), whose work was based in elementary education, said that "social class has a powerful influence on parent involvement patterns" (p.3). This study concerns secondary school students; however, I feel her findings are still pertinent for this study regardless of the age of the children, as the socio-cultural background at both FASS and BISF is mostly middle to upper-middle class. This is also relevant as there is a continuity in the educational and parental cultures both at FASS and BISF right through the years from Kindergarten to the senior years. Lareau (2000) mentioned that middle class and upper-middle class families, as opposed to working-class families, are usually more cognizant of the educational processes, more interventionist, more critical of the faculty. They also manage a better interconnection between the two 'fields' (home and school) - as conceptualised by Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu underlined the relational nature of a 'field', but more in terms of interactions in the social world rather than relational as in 'between individuals'. Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) conceptualized a 'field' as

a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of species of power [or capital] (p.96-97).

A school system, or a church, or a 'home', are examples of fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), where a field is "the locus of relations of force" (pp.102-103) where transformations take place subsequent to these internal struggles (such as financial and socio-relational). Within the context of this paper, an international school, both in its generic and its local form is a field and, as Bourdieu (1992) added, is where "agents and institutions constantly struggle, according to the regularities and the rules constitutive of this space of play" (p.102). The field is therefore the arena in which unfold all the different forms of capital (Ritzer, 2000). Power relations vary and 'hierarchize' depending on the fields, the contexts, and the interdependence between the different fields. The school then becomes a domain where such sociologically-impacting

interactions can take place. In the case of an ISc, the families' socio-economic and socio-cultural positions bring their own essence to the culture of the school which slowly generates a fabric of practices, which Bourdieu (1972/1977) referred to as 'habitus'. An example of where this may take place is during parental interventions and involvement, whether it be in PTA forums or in the way they deal with their children's school education. Bourdieu said that the habitus is engendered from history and "produces individual and collective practices" (p.82). The 'field' and 'habitus' are two of three major concepts developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu's other key concept that he developed was the notion of capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970/1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu identified three major kinds of capital: economic, cultural, and social; plus a fourth kind, symbolic capital described as "the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.291), which may be applied to any of the other three forms of capital. Economic capital is "immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.242) and thus can be understood as an economic enabler. Economic capital can be of significance in both FASS and BISF where money and cultural goods can have an impact on behaviours (for example creating tension or friction between peers). Money may also potentially lead to parental control, such as: having high expectations for their child's education at school; and being critical of, and making demands on, the school because of their business relationship with the school. This can happen during the Admissions process and later during the child's schooling.

Bourdieu (1986, p.242) wrote that cultural capital can espouse three forms:

The embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; [...] the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, [...], [...]); and [...] the institutionalized state, [...] as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications (p.242).

Cultural capital, in all its forms, is developed and transferred to the next generation through material and symbolic cultural vectors, and contributes to create a socio-cultural intergenerational continuity (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014). Cultural capital is also convertible into economic capital. Social capital, referring to social connections, and sometimes convertible into economic capital, is the accumulation of all resources accessible to particular groups through recognized and institutional codes (Richardson,

1986). Social capital hence suggests the power of ingrained socio-cultural constructs and their impact on individuals and groups over time, in spite of potential reforming forces. This notion of social capital is especially relevant in the case of international schools, and in particular FASS and BISF. For instance, parental populations include middle to upper-middle class diplomatic families whose children traditionally attend international schools, and whose embassies typically recommend local ISCs. A similar pattern takes place with families from artistic milieus and other families with traditional and strong socio-economic and professional networks, who may frequently recommend a particular ISC to family friends and acquaintances. There might therefore be a socio-cultural/socio-economic transmission process taking place, in which what is considered as a privileged education is (s)electively passed on to 'chosen families', who themselves benefit from the reproduction of privileges. This occurs therefore before the child even starts school, and then throughout the child's schooling.

However, the school may not solely be a place of reproduction of the families' habitus. Nash (1990) suggested that to Bourdieu, habitus – and cultural and economic capitals – are socially reproductive rather than transformative. Nash, however, believed that schooling *can* be transformative, although Mills (2008) disagreed and argued that there *is* a transformative potential in Bourdieu's works, and that social reproduction is not exclusive of agency. As Nash (1990) wrote, schooling has "its own power to shape consciousness, over and above the power of the family, and it is clear that the role of the school is acknowledged as active, and not merely passive in its "legitimation" of family acquired habitus" (p.435). In the case of ISC/IB schools, which aim at shaping global learners from various cultural backgrounds, there might be opportunities of transformation through exposure to diversity of cultures and values; that is, there might be opportunities of a disruption of the reproduction (in any direction it may be).

In addition to considering the impact of socio-cultural and socio-economic factors, one must equally be sensitive to the multicultural dimensions of parental involvement.

2.2.7 *Cultural Dimensions*

Hofstede G. (1991), after extensive studies of cultural traits and values, initially defined four initial dimensions of national cultures (power distance, collectivism vs individualism, femininity vs masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance). Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010) eventually redefined six dimensions: The Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism vs Collectivism (Individualism Index, IDV), Masculinity vs Femininity

(Masculinity Index, MAS), the Avoidance of Uncertainty (Uncertainty Avoidance Index, UAI), the Long and Short-term Orientation Index (Long Term Orientation, LTO) and the Indulgence vs Restraint Index (IVR).

With my study in mind, I focus exclusively on two of Hofstede, G. *et al.*'s indices: the Power Distance and the Individualism indices (Appendices B & B[bis]). Before going into more detail about Power Distance and Individualism in an ISc, it needs to be mentioned that Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010), in their chapters on Power Distance at School (pp. 69-70), Individualism and Collectivism at School (pp. 117-118), and 'Intercultural Encounters in Schools' (pp. 393-395), do not speak from an international school perspective. They list two types of intercultural encounters, between local teachers and 'foreign' students, or between foreign teachers and local students. The profile of both ISc faculty and students is much more complex, with around fifty to sixty different nationalities and many different types of intercultural encounters. However, Hofstede G.'s extensive research (1991, 2005, 2010) has spanned two decades and involved more than seventy nationalities, and I believe it would be an error to not include it in this review.

Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010) defined the concept of Power Distance as being

the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Institutions are the basic elements of society, such as the family, the school, and the community; organizations are the places where people work [authors' italics] (p.61).

According to Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010), students who come from a society that applies a large power distance usually treat their teachers respectfully, and sometimes through fear, older teachers being more respected than younger ones (Appendix B). In class, students with a larger PD speak up solely if invited to, and usually do not criticize their teachers. Students coming from a society with a small power distance feel more disinhibited and are likely to express their feelings more openly in class. Hofstede, G. *et al.* suggested that parents coming from these societies might be more likely to advocate for their child against a school member. Chapter Five examines whether this happens to be the case in an international school, which, by nature, regroups a multitude of different nationalities with a whole spectrum of different power distances (Appendix B).

Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010) defined the concept of Individualism as

[pertaining] to *societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him – or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups...* (p.92).

At school, individualism can translate into differences in speaking up in large groups and in expressing one's point of view; students from collectivist cultures may hesitate speaking up in front of larger audiences (Appendix B[bis]). In an 'individualist classroom', there may be more open confrontations and debates (Hofstede, G. *et al.* , p.118), and children may be encouraged to find their voice and express their opinions. In the family, Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010, p.107) suggested that in an individualist culture, debating openly is encouraged whilst in a collectivist family, the group overrides the individual. As a point of reference for three of the major participant countries, USA and Great Britain respectively rank on the IDV at 1st and 3rd place, that is are highly individualist cultures, and France ranks 13th/14th (Appendix B[bis]).

A complementary cultural element to consider when interpreting the data comes from what McGill (1992) referred to as the family's 'cultural story': "The cultural story refers to an ethnic or cultural group's origin, migration, and identity... [A] cultural story tells the group's collective story of how to cope with life and how to respond to pain and trouble" (p.340). This particular point is important in that it uses the idea of "ethnic adaptive life strategies" (McGill, 1983, p.110). Individuals thus gradually integrate through their life ethnic-interdependent strategies that help them adapt themselves to new situations that require some form of adaptation. A student attending an international school in a foreign country for the first time due to his or her family's expatriate posting may be facing (at least) two cultural adaptations: The first adaptation refers to the host country, and the second one to the international school itself. These adaptations are not mundane. They may disrupt a family's professional and personal equilibrium and each individual's sense of self. The student, and indeed the whole family, then need to draw from their own life values and cultural stories to adapt to new cultural ways of thinking, and this indeed may not come without potential resistance and tension.

Another cultural insight is worth mentioning at this point. Drawing from extensive studies with Japanese and American executives, Hall, E. and Hall, M. (1987) discovered and developed concepts which they reported to be specific to certain cultures. Although Hall, E. and Hall, M.'s studies date back to the late eighties, I still choose to reference them as Hall, E. and Hall, M. have been major contributors in understanding cultural

differences in communication. They developed three main conceptual dualities: low and high contexts (in relation to surrounding information); monochronic and polychronic time factors (in relation to time); and high and low territoriality factors (space). These three concepts illuminate the understanding of students' perceptions of power.

The first concept, 'Context' "is the information that surrounds an event and is inextricably bound up with the meaning of the event" (Hall, E. & Hall, M., 1987, p.7). France (a Latin culture) would be a 'high-context' culture and therefore people need not rely on explicit messages, the information being "already in the person" (Hall, E. & Hall, M., 1987, p.8). On the other hand, the United States of America would be a 'low-context' culture that favours explicit information every time people are required to do something. Ting-Toomey (1994) suggested that in "individualistic, [low-context] communicators, the bargaining resources in conflict typically revolve around individual pride and self-esteem, individual ego-based emotions, and individual sense of autonomy and power" (p.362). In an international school, different styles of communication and expectations may thus precede content and create a potential basis for misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

Two domains explored in the students' interviews are 'space' and 'time'. Hall, E. and Hall, M. (1987) argued "space also communicates power" (p.10), in that the choice of place for offices, for instance, may communicate hierarchical levels without any kind of verbal statement. The notion of territoriality is also understood differently, according to Hall, E. and Hall, M. depending on the culture: "In humans territoriality is highly developed and strongly influenced by culture" (1987, p.12). Hall, E. and Hall, M. suggested that the sense of territoriality is especially strong in Americans. The third concept which might potentially create tensions between individuals who demonstrate little awareness of that concept is related to time. For Hall, E. and Hall, M., cultures experience 'time' in two main types (especially true in the business world), in a 'monochronic' way, that is "paying attention to and doing only one thing at a time", and in a 'polychronic' way, "being involved with many things at once" (p.16), ways that are not always compatible, according to Hall, E. and Hall, M. (p.20). An international school is a space where these three concepts in all their variants are constantly coming into play, and therefore potentially creating tensions and frictions and, more generally, power dynamics. McGill's ethnic adaptive strategies (1983), Hofstede *et al.*'s PDI and IDV cultural differences - to varying degrees - and Hall, E. and Hall, M.'s cultural

hidden dimensions may *partly* explain differences of responses and reactions amid the different ethnicities across the different sub-systems. Comparing individuals according to cultural categorisation of societies can lead to stereotyping, and ecological fallacy, that is comparing an individual's behaviour solely with the society's cultural data (Hofstede, G. & McCrae, 2004; Fail, 2010; Grenness, 2012) hence not logging in to an individual's personal experiences and personality; Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010) clarified that the

personality of an individual [...] is his or her unique personal set of mental programmes that needn't be shared with any other human being. It is based on traits that are partly inherited within the individual's unique set of genes and partly learned. *Learned* means modified by the influence of collective programming (culture) *as well as* by unique personal experiences [authors' italics] (p.7).

One needs to be vigilant to not *systematically* equate cultural values (such as Hofstede, G.'s) with individual behaviours. Reciprocally, it is necessary to be mindful of cultural differences and, as mentioned above, not be culturally-blind when dealing with multicultural populations, and especially when considering relationships of power across a multicultural staff and student population. This paper is not a study of 'power' in an international school (or two international schools). It is an analysis of students' *perceptions* of power, the study of what they understand by 'power relations' between different sub-systems of a community (students, parents/guardians and staff and faculty), and how they experience these power relations. Individuals with a particular socio-cultural history and particular cultural narratives may respond differently to power dynamics compared to someone from a different cultural story. To each student, there is a specific conception of power representations and therefore a particular individual understanding and perception of power relations. Nevertheless, it is useful to situate the notion of power within a theoretical and evolving framework before interpreting the students' perceptions, and before discussing a model of power dynamics. What I mean by 'evolutive' is not referring to an evolution of the concept over time, but a conceptual and spatial evolution of power, starting from a unidirectional 'top-down' concept of power to a 'bi-directional' and then more pervasive idea of power.

2.3 POWER

2.3.1 Conceptual Frameworks

Russell's quote on power (1938), as a "fundamental concept in social science" (p.1), albeit dating back to the context of pre-World War II, is still regularly mentioned in the literature on power. Yet as 'fundamental' as the concept is, it is difficult to find a generic definition of power. Keltner, Gruenfeld and Anderson (2003) suggested a general definition of power as "an individual's relative capacity to modify others' states by providing or withholding resources or administering punishments" (p.265). Keltner *et al.* (2003) said that resources and punishments can be both material and social. This is what I would call a unidirectional 'top-down' definition of power, with the power holder being empowered and omnipotent, a kind of power which is frequently implemented in schools. Taking students' privileges away or expelling a student would be, for instance, a material punishment, and depriving a student from his break time, a social constraint. This kind of power fits in what French and Raven initially labelled (French & Raven, 1959) as Coercive and Reward Power, which were two of six bases of power that they identified: Legitimate, Expertise, Reference, Coercion, Reward and Informational (Raven, 1992, 1993), although the 'Informational' base of power was not initially included in 1959 (Raven, 1959, 2008), and was then changed to Persuasion (Raven, 1965, 1993).

These six bases of power are present in schools. For example, leaders use the persuasiveness of information power in controlling the information that is given to teachers (such as changes in buildings, timetables, staffing, etc.). Referent Power is often considered as a good model to apply in schools, with leaders and teachers modelling good behaviour. Some of these forms of power are also exercised between administration, students, and parents in any combination. Raven later worked on elaborating further his bases of power. For example, he added the 'personal' and 'impersonal' forms of Coercive Power and Reward Power, "[recognizing] that personal approval from someone whom we like can result in quite powerful reward power" (1993, p.234). Praise and recognition from someone liked or appreciated adds an emotional component to dynamics of power.

An additional differentiation relevant to this study concerns Raven's Expert and Referent forms of Power, in which he differentiated 'negative' forms of power ("negative expert power" and "negative referent power"). The subject, then, does the

opposite of what the agent of power tells him/her to do due to a lack of trust in the agent of power. It recognizes the idea that power is not necessarily top-to-bottom, unidirectional, and that the order is being questioned or not fully trusted. It also shows the evolution of the concept and pragmatic application of power which has taken place in schools. Conley and Goldman (1994) have furthered this concept to promote facilitative leadership in schools, defined as 'leading without controlling', assuming a "...free movement of energy within the system; power flows much like electricity in a circuit, or impulses in the nervous system" (p.4). The idea of enabling a 'flow' of power steps away from a perennial holding of the position of power. Notwithstanding, whilst there is a sense of empowerment in this managing style, this framework still objectifies and conceptualizes power as an entity to be owned and distributed. The way I intuitively conceptualize power is not as exclusive, and is not solely structural. The complexity and psychology of power relationships amongst staff highlights that power is also pervasive, insidious and 'untouchable'.

Robinson and Taylor (2007, p.13) have suggested that

under the influence of postmodernism, power has become recognized for its diversity, subtlety and complexity, for having rhizomatic and horizontal as well as vertical dimensions, not as a 'thing' to be possessed or given away but a mode or relation which inhabits all social processes, and, importantly, not of itself a negative force.

This flexibility of power, also highlighted by Freire (1970/2005), supported by the installation of communication between the respective members of the school community, contribute to generating a fluid 'new school culture' (Robinson & Taylor, 2007). My interest in the discourse and my vision of power in the domain of education intuitively drew me to some of Foucault's postmodern notions about power. Foucault (1980) wrote:

... in thinking of the mechanisms of power, I am thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives (p.39).

Power is "diffuse rather than concentrated, embodied and enacted rather than possessed, discursive rather than purely coercive, and constitutes agents rather being deployed by them" (Gaventa, 2003, p.3). Power relations are everywhere (Ball, 2013) and touch and

affect people's lives. As Ball (2013) highlighted, power is not a fixed and possessed entity that is being used against a "state of freedom" (p.30), but rather an intricate web of multiple, interrelating, fluid, micro-power relations, in the form of behaviours that together constitute a larger social web of strategies. However, Foucault's concept of capillary power, or that power is 'everywhere', has for instance been questioned by Hartsock (1987), a feminist philosopher, who argued that if "power is everywhere, [then it is] ultimately nowhere" (p. 170). This could be understood as a dismissive view of power. Foucault does not necessarily seek to draw a theory from his conceptualisation of power; ultimately, Hartsock (1987, p.159) argues that this may be of disservice to minorities: "Those of us who are not [...] a part of the minority which controls our world, need to know how it works".

Notwithstanding, I understand Foucault's postmodern notion of power as an ontological, qualifying, pervasive and latent concept rather than a potentially quantified entity, which can be *uniquely and solely* possessed, controlled and guarded by dominating bodies -even if the latter may and can happen. I am drawn to the idea that power is everywhere, that it is the backbone of organizations and social relationships; and that it is also one of the constituents of the making of self. I believe that this flow of power is present in schools such as through institutional power relationships, between parents and their children over school matters, and in ways which are not necessarily visibly evident. In effect, I believe that power dynamics are at times 'invisible'. The power is not tangible, seen, or heard, but potentially based on past experiences, leaving traces of power difference amongst individuals. Foucault (1980) talked about those intricate power relations as a "net-like organisation", and "[...where] individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application" (p.98).

People are viewed as active and reactive '*vehicles of power*'; they are not passive targets of power actions, but the seat of power struggles and responses (Balan, 2010), with struggles being both "formative and informative" (Ball, 2013, p.149), a process through which one gets to know one's own self. Foucault (1982) talked about power struggles as being central to who we are, more a form of power, a technique that makes us subjects, rather than an 'attacking tool'.

Whilst struggles may be understood as 'formative and informative', they are still part of the responses to the experience of constraints and/or feeling powerless. In the case of a school (here an international school), power struggles may be happening, for example, through perceptions of power hierarchies, with well-defined agents of power.

2.3.2 Power In Social Structures

In his analysis of power in social structures Lukes (Hayward & Lukes, 2008) spoke of ‘agent-centric’ moral, political, and evaluative contexts of power, and posits that social constraints are in the hands of individual, “identifiable agents” (p.17). Hayward (Hayward & Lukes, 2008) suggested, instead, that agents act according to structures (laws, rules and norms). She added that

as agents act and interact within structural limits, they develop expectations about what it is that one does, and what it is that one ought to do, in particular contexts. They develop not just subjective, but also intersubjective, understandings of the meanings particular actions hold (p.14).

Whilst they differ on the nature of constraints on freedom, Hayward and Lukes (2008) concurred in the evaluative function of power, stating that the analysis of power relations must lead to examining notions of “freedom, domination, and hierarchy” (p.5). In the case of a school as a social structure, the research seems to show that constraints and hierarchies are normally consistent and to be expected (such as discipline protocols and assessments). Dowling and Osborne (1985/1994) reported that clinicians believe that a hierarchical structure is necessary whenever adults are in charge, for consistent and clear rules and limits help children feel emotionally held and secure. They also learn that breaking those rules leads to consequences. The constraints are traditionally and usually generated by Leadership, teachers, and even the IBO itself towards the ‘powerless’: the students (and indirectly the teachers). Students can opt to do the exact opposite of what is requested (Raven’s ‘negative power’). I believe that, due to the complexity of an international school, the ‘negative power’ is only one facet of the power relationship between students and adults (teachers, parents). Foucault (1982) spoke of a relationship which is not coercive, yet is “at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle, less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation” (p.790), which appears to be a sound pedagogical and relational method for school relationships. This ‘power ballet’ taking place in an international school is the basis of what this thesis is about. As Taylor and Robinson (2009) suggested, power is an essential base of the philosophical and educational development of student voice.

2.3.3 *Student Voice*

Fielding (2015) suggested that if democracy matters “for our way of life” (p.26), then schools should let democracy in, and encourage generational reciprocity. Fielding (2001, 2015) advocated for the development of a “participatory tradition of democracy at the heart of all that we do in schools” (2015, p. 26), and believed in ‘intergenerational learning’. He proposed three main reasons for supporting ‘intergenerational learning’: the evidence of educational benefits for both students and adults; a collective responsibility for resolving difficulties; and finally, the need to fully embrace, preserve and develop democracy, because democracy ‘matters’. Fielding hence believed in a truly democratic dialogue in schools which involved a radical and authentic reconceptualization and transformation of pedagogy and structural organisation. With regards to FASS and BISF, both schools implement IB principles which carry concepts promoting student voice, and which *theoretically* should be integrated into the schools’ practices. I discuss in Chapter Seven how the IB principles align with, or stand in tension with, the ISc operations, and how students’ perceptions of power relations highlight the complexity of the implementation of these IB principles.

Student voice may be one vehicle to achieve this democratic dialogue, mentioned by Fielding (2015). ‘Student voice’, sometimes referred to as ‘learner voice’, is more complex than the simple morpheme might imply (Czerniawski, 2012a) and encompasses different concepts, interpretations and stories. Czerniawski (2012b, p.131) refers to student voice (or ‘pupil voice’) as “the formal and informal processes in schools that enable all pupils to be consulted on their education”.

A democratic participation and consultation of students can be found in pioneer schools such as Bedales, an independent school in Southern England founded in the 1890s, or at St George-in-the-East, a secondary school in London established by Bloom in 1945 (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). Later, in the nineteen sixties and seventies, there was a wider move towards empowering students in the process of decision-making with the aim of improving schools’ performances. Yet it is in the late nineteen nineties and the first two decades of the millennium that student voice became the subject of much educational research (Fielding, 2001, 2015; Arnot & Reay, 2004; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; Mitra, 2004; Cook-Sather, 2006; Czerniawski, 2012a, 2012b; Biddulph, 2011; Hopfenbeck, 2013; Hunter & O’Brien, 2018), and the focus of the United Nations and various governments (Article 12 of the UNCRC, 1989; Education Act of 2005).

Student voice has gradually taken more space in educational theory and practice, and been implemented through projects such as the ‘Young People’s Geographies’ (YPG) project (Geographical Association, 2006-2011), involving the collaboration of students, teachers, and researchers in a Geography curriculum-making endeavour (Biddulph, 2011), or as in Lymm High School (England) which developed in 2002 a comprehensive student council system, Big School Democracy (Libra Television, 2006), where all students could be heard via a highly structured system of class representatives. Representatives met to facilitate discussion and take action on school policies, infrastructure, and other general matters of concern to students. The student council was led by a ‘global citizenship coordinator’, a title independent of yet reminiscent of the IB language. An increased student participation and consultation in their learning is thought to be beneficial to learners and all involved in school institutions (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; Mitra, 2004; Czerniawski, 2012a). Freire (1970/2005) believed that teacher-student dialogue is central to education and learning.

Mitra (2006) talks about teachers and students collaborating to address school problems and matters. She underlines how students’ agency, feeling of belonging and sense of competence are essential to the development of children and youth (Mitra, 2004). For Cook-Sather (2006, p.5), student voice is about “presence, power, and agency” and gives students the opportunity to express their opinions, and especially to be heard and be part of the decision-making.

He adds that such consultations need to be exercised with trust and integrity. This posits the question as to what *is* an authentic implementation of ‘student voice’.

In order to comply with governmental and accreditation requirements, or to follow research on culture of learning, learners’ autonomy and student voice, many schools increase the participation of students in curriculum projects, in school organisation, and consult students on teachers’ performance, or on choosing new leaders.

However, the notion of student empowerment and democratic learning is complex and subject to various implementations in its practice (Fielding, 2001; Silva, 2001; Arnot and Reay, 2007; Robinson and Taylor, 2007; Biddulph, 2011; Busher, 2012; Czerniawski, 2012b). “Voice is currently popular but one of the perils of popularity is surface compliance” (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006, p. 228). Lundy (2007) questioned the phrase ‘student voice’ for she sees it as reductive and apt to be perceived as a ‘phase’. Regrouping all the different facets of such a complex concept under one sole phrase

could lead to an over-simplification of the concept, and subsequently to an over-simplification of its practice (such as tokenism).

Schools committed to developing student voice for the benefit of both institutional and personal growth (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006; Czerniawski, 2012a) need to reflect on the implications of changing their culture of learning, in order to avoid a tokenistic and *ad hoc* implementation of student voice. Schools must then examine the authenticity and efficacy of the motivational and dialogic process. Schools must pay attention to the inclusiveness of student voice; that is, they need to ask themselves whose voice is most likely to be heard, and unheard, whose voice is allowed to be expressed, to be listened to, where, what about, and in what language (Fielding, 2001). Finally, schools must rethink power relations between teachers and youth, and acknowledge the reciprocal anxiety that the development of democratic student voice might generate amongst students and faculty (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006); schools, thus, must evaluate the readiness and relevance for potential change.

This is especially significant in international schools implementing the IB. For instance, ‘student voice’ *could* be considered as one aspect of IB independent learning, an LP component (part of being a ‘risk taker’, an ‘inquirer’, and a ‘communicator’, for instance). Yet, whilst the concept of ‘student voice’ is omnipresent throughout the LP attributes, the actual term ‘student voice’ is hardly visible in the IB vocabulary. I will come back to this point later in the discussion, and examine how the notion of ‘student voice’ may be linked to the IB.

2.3.4 *Power In International Schools*

Chowdhury’s and Phan Le Ha’s core argument (2014) is that “it is through complex articulations of power and discourse that our ways of ‘seeing’ the international student ultimately materialise, and likewise international students’ ways of ‘seeing’ themselves can easily be categorised under the banner of the exercising power” (p.22). Their work is critical as there are few studies on ‘power and students’ that have been conducted from the students’ perspective. Chowdhury and Phan Le Ha (2014) highlighted how, in international education, perceptions, attitude and terminology constantly change over time, and how such changes may “provide a new way of constituting knowledge, and can explain the link between constructions of power and subjectivity” (p.26).

International students become learners at the centre of an educational discourse that contains many unsaid thoughts and meanings: They are the heirs of past cultural and

current intellectual colonisations; they are the global citizens shaped to know the World and promote peace, yet espousing ‘Western’ values and culture and promoting the English language, which becomes (at least temporarily) their norm.

It is this complexity and ‘paradoxicality’ that contribute to a multiplicity of discourses and the construction of power and knowledge in a variety of ways. Chowdhury and Phan Le Ha drew their argument from Foucault’s concept of discourse of power and knowledge, on how “any discursive practice is both a means of oppressing and a means of resistance” (2014, p.29) and how through this process, individual identities are being constructed. They constructed their argument based on the impact and symbolic power of the English language and teaching of the English language as another language (TESOL) taking place in international schools. The ‘capillary action’ of power, through language, shapes and constructs international schools and students. The discursive process, in their study, situates itself in a web including both the micro-world of students and the macro-world of international education, shaping an ISc dominant discursive identity (Chowdhury & Phan Le Ha, 2014). However, Chowdhury and Phan Le Ha (2014), and Ball (2013) agreed that Foucault’s conceptualisation of discourse goes beyond language, and that he was “more concerned to address the structures and rules that constitute a discourse rather than the texts and utterances produced within it” (Ball, 2013, p.19).

In this paper, discourses of power as perceived by students may appear to arise not only from the complexity of the schools’ educational and socio-cultural fabric, but also from the developmental and emotional and family contexts. It is to be noted that students may not necessarily experience or perceive ‘power’ as a positive force or resource, but might experience any potential exercise of power as an authoritarian or authoritative act, and might qualify it as such. They might also confuse ‘authority’ with ‘power’, so it is relevant at this point to shed light on this point.

2.3.5 Authority And Power

The distinctions between ‘authority’ and ‘power’ are indeed ambiguous, and Barry (1995) wrote that the terms have been “used interchangeably in ways that mask the differences” (p.86), which is also the case in schools, where both terms may be used interchangeably.

There is a plethora of studies on the concept of authority over the last few decades (MacIver, 1947; Weber, 1958; 1978; Peters, 1966; Barry, 1995) and many different

lenses through which to examine the concept (political, sociological and psychological). My intention here is not to specifically examine the notion of authority, but rather to set a framework through which I will use the respective notions of ‘authority’ vs ‘power’. For the sake of this study, I mostly use MacIver’s (1947) and Weber’s (1958) conceptual frameworks of the idea of authority, albeit tangentially, and as a frame of reference. MacIver saw authority as “the right to determine policies and to act as a leader” (p.83). This concept encompasses to a certain extent all three of Weber’s types of authority: charismatic (related to the charisma and personality of the individual); traditional (authority through tradition and dominance); and legal (legal validity and legitimacy) forms. Njegovan, Vukadinović and Nešić (2011) believed that Weber’s types of authority are still currently applicable in this beginning of the 21st century, especially in management. Yet, as will be seen below, Rose (1998) is suggesting that the modern world has brought about new forms of authority. Whilst keeping MacIver’s and Weber’s concepts as one base of reference, I feel that Weber’s categories, for instance, overlap in particular ways, depending on who ‘holds’ the authority. In an international school, authority is usually distributed across several ‘bodies’ of members of the association, such as the Board, parents, leadership and faculty. In terms of the parent-student connection, parents have parental authority over their children; as far as power relations are concerned, they generate from the nature of the family social unit and from developmental processes. Staff and faculty have ‘natural’ authority over students due to the institutional nature of a school. As Peters (1966) suggested, “[teachers are] put *in* authority to do a certain job for the community and to maintain social control in the school. He must also be *an* authority on some aspect of the culture of the community” (author’s italics, p.240). Power relations in the case of this study are complex. The data will show that power relations constantly shift within multiples bipolarities. As mentioned earlier, students may gain some kind of authority through transformational processes. For instance, Rose (1998) proposed that psychology has induced ‘new social authorities’ such as psychologists and counsellors, and that these ‘new social authorities’ have transformed the original authority by intra-developing an ethical basis to the authority:

It becomes not so much a matter of ordering, controlling, commanding obedience and loyalty, but of improving the capacity of individuals to exercise authority over themselves –improving the capacity of schoolchildren, employees, [...] to understand their own actions and to regulate their own conduct. The exercise of authority, here,

becomes a therapeutic matter: the most powerful way of acting upon the actions of others is to change the ways in which they will govern themselves (pp.63-64).

This long excerpt underlines the power of transformation from being the subject (of someone) to being the subject (of self) through an enabling authorisation process, and which is reminiscent of another kind of transformation: One that is embodied by one of the characteristics of the IB promoting the learning of independent study skills, and facilitated by teachers who teach those skills. Teachers have the authority to 'fix their own rules' to promote students' independent skills. Through this process, they might therefore exercise power over students, theoretically for the benefit of the students: The process is empowering for the students; not only do they develop independent skills for particular tasks, it may also train them to be more autonomous in their ways of thinking and dealing with adults (parents and teachers alike). Individuals and groups do not necessarily have the authority to exercise the power they happen to exercise: Authority can be both anecdotal to the exercise of power, and occasionally (not always), the exercise of power without authority may cause a crossing of boundaries. Alternatively, the authority is extended or displaced by individuals from one sub-system over another sub-system (for example, staff over students). This, for instance, may lead to students feeling that teachers are unfairly exercising power over them. This may happen for example throughout the process of homework distribution or completion, in the feeling of not having a voice in educational matters, or, linked to the latter, in the allocation and self-appropriation of students' space and time both at home and at school. Many times, the perception of power may be related to the notion that boundaries might be unmovable or, on the contrary, blurred and ambiguous, and sometimes arbitrary.

2.3.6 *Boundaries*

One element of this study has been the relational aspect of homework (between parents and students, or between teachers and students) and how it is perceived by students, rather than on the academic debate of its educational value, for its potential to highlight power dynamics. A non-negligible aspect of the effects of homework on students is how they perceive the value of homework, whether it be in placing high value on homework, judging it as non-necessary, or as a tool to resist authority. Equally important to the meaning and purpose of homework are the consequences attached to the students carrying out (or not) their homework, whether it means the potential jeopardizing of the students' well-being, such as pointed out by Galloway, Conner and

Pope (2013), the creation of conflict between students and adults (parents and teachers), or perhaps the embodiment of a struggle that allows them to grow.

Galloway *et al.* (2013) studied the non-academic effects of homework on students in privileged high-performing schools and found that students were prepared to sacrifice their well-being for academic performance by accomplishing long hours of daily homework: less time with their family and their friends, less time for extracurricular activities and community commitments, yet more stress and increased risk of developing health issues. In situations like this, the distance between the two territories 'home' and 'school' may get narrower with the possibility of students feeling blurred boundaries, with all the feelings this might provoke. Naturally, for students to assess whether spending such long hours of homework at home (to the detriment of their own well-being) represents a crossing of boundaries may mostly be a matter of the students' own perception and judgment. However, if there is an evaluated risk of developing health issues due to an overwhelming quantity of homework, and/or if there is a strong expression of discontentment amongst students, then it may become necessary for educators to examine those risks and therefore the potential crossing of boundaries - and to eventually act upon it.

Wood and Talmon (1983, p.1) defined a boundary as "the limit of a particular territory (or the separation between two territories)". Caffyn (2013, p. 213) precisely identified a model with six types of boundaries in international schools: physical (e.g. the use of space, rules, etc.), psychological (e.g. the socio-emotional factors), structural (such as the IB curriculum), cultural (different cultures, and types of cultures), external (e.g. the expatriate population, international clientele, etc.) and power (hierarchies, positions, political). Caffyn (2013, p.213) argued that this model can help shed light on international schools' organization and social structure. He added that whilst national schools have similar boundaries, international schools have more sub-cultural and socio-cultural complex dimensions. In this paper, I draw from these concepts of boundaries and adopt two overarching domains where boundaries may take place, separating the conceptual from the physical/institutional. However, these two domains can sometimes overlap. The first type of boundary refers to the separations between the three *sub-systems* - school, students, parents. Within that context, boundaries delineate sociological, socio-cultural, pedagogical, value-based, psychological and judgment-laden 'territories'. In this context, the crossing, permeability or sense of permanence of boundaries can be perceptive and therefore subjective, based on individuals' emotional

needs, actions but also values and beliefs. Across those three sub-systems, there are therefore potentially frequent crossings of boundaries, whether it be for academic, emotional or psychological reasons as well as moments when students feel constrained or hampered.

The second type of boundary has school-based geographical and temporal components and refers, for example, to the different spaces that students must use in school.

Boundary-crossing disrupts the notion of private geographical or psychological territory, which might also generate, in turn, emotional and psychological states such as conflict, resistance, defence mechanisms, or acceptance. Illuminating the notion of boundary-crossing is therefore critical to the understanding of power dynamics.

If and when boundaries become arbitrary, they then may become ambiguous to, and be questioned by, the individuals and groups who are subjected to them; subsequently, they may become porous, and power dynamics become fluid. They may also feel rigid, and students may then feel powerless. Students constantly navigate the boundaries between their different social worlds, and ‘boundary-crossing’ may happen either naturally, easily, or as an act of resistance. Phelan, Davidson and Cao (1991) believed that schools need to facilitate those transitions between the students’ different social worlds. Caffyn (2013) talked about the notion of boundaries in the context of the social systems theory, and how they are instrumental in the organization of a system. Caffyn agreed with Hernes (2004) and argued that boundaries “are not fixed or static but fluid” (Caffyn, p. 206). Caffyn suggested that in ISCs, school leaderships must ensure that boundaries need to be secure without being barriers: “The need among many stakeholders for identity, and the vulnerability international schools have due to differing cultures, subcultures, expectations and emotional needs, means that there is a great likelihood for cross-boundary exchange and conflict” (p.206). This complex flow of emotions is pervasive throughout the whole system and weakens the boundaries between the various sub-systems. Caffyn (2013) said that “emotion [becomes] a factor in extending political power and ensuring identity” (p.218), although it is unclear which ‘identity’ he is talking about: each individual’s identity or the community’s identity? The international school potentially becomes a territory where the political, emotional, and cultural positioning of boundaries helps the shaping of identities. Schools may benefit from envisioning school boundaries with a postmodern perspective. Schools could then grow from acknowledging the multiplicity and complexity of boundaries across the main sub-systems, and revisit areas of potential conflict. One area of

potential conflict and boundary-crossing is homework. Pontecorvo, Liberati and Monaco (2013) referred to homework as representing “one of the main crosswords between the ‘outside’ of the institutional children’s space and time (organized by school) and the ‘inside’ of their domestic sphere of experience” (p.4). In the case of an international school, these crossroads maybe the seat of boundary-crossings. The multicultural profile of an international school is likely to bring into play a whole variety of cultural, socio-educational experiences, and family stories that may potentially create reactions and at best discussions between ‘home’ and ‘school’.

Lazarova, Westman and Shaffer (2010) articulated the occurrence of boundary blurring between home and school in the context of international work assignments. This can indeed increase the sense of urgency mentioned earlier in regards to parental investment for their children’s education. Whilst the working spouse may not feel the same emotions of anger and loss as the potential non-working spouse and children, he or she carries a big responsibility for making the assignment succeed. Expatriates often work longer hours than they did back at home, sometimes due to time zones and local expectations. Working spouses may end up not being as present for the rest of the family, and therefore leave the school commitments to the non-working spouse. Traditional roles can be disrupted.

Changes in the family system bring about changes in the functioning of the family with, for instance, the non-working parent taking over some additional responsibilities as well as occasionally getting involved in their children’s school matters to the extent of stepping over parent-child boundaries and into the child’s school space.

Boundaries can be crossed within school limits too, and the section below sheds some perspective on what some of the literature says with regards to the schools’ ‘discipline-shaping’, and in particular the regulation of time and space in school.

2.3.7 Spaces, Places And Time

Foucault (1975/1995) referred to the school, like social institutions such as the prison and the asylum, as a disciplinary technology of power, a place where social control may take place via the implementation of regulating techniques and mechanisms such as the organization of the residents/inmates’ time and the potential constant surveillance of their movements (using a Panopticon spatial architecture). Knowledge of the residents’/inmates’ time and movement gave the observer knowledge, hence power. What is important here in this concept is that residents/inmates know of that observer’s

knowledge, the aim being “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (p.201). The knowledge is reciprocal whilst the hierarchy is respected. Power had produced control, and control produced power. As Ball (2013) noted, for Foucault, discipline mechanisms served as normalising and breaking down “individuals, places, time, movements, [...] so that they can be seen [...] and modified” (p.46). As Rose (1999) wrote, “the layout of buildings to the structure of timetables, [...] organize humans in space and time in order to achieve certain outcomes” (p.8).

What is relevant in Foucault’s Panopticon concept for this study is the idea of institutional power as a way to regulate and discipline through an institutionalized system of technologies, a notion of visibility and invisibility of power, the relationship of power and knowledge through observation and, importantly, the dynamics and ‘circularity’ of power. Whilst Foucault wrote that whilst certain types of techniques of punishments go back to the eighteenth century, he identified this circularity of power as still modern “...these techniques [...] attained a level at which the formation of knowledge and the increase of power regularly reinforce one another in a circular process” (1975/1995, p.224). Time and space (concretely, allocated places for children) serve as dynamic relays contributing to the on-going ‘circulation’ of power.

In a school, administrative staff usually determine and design ‘places for children’. Besides the attribution of normal studying places (classrooms, library...) and play/relaxation places (school yard, student lounge...), schools also attempt to create places *for* the students. These places are created keeping in mind students’ general well-being and discipline, and might not be exactly designed to the students’ desires. Rasmussen (2004) argued that whilst the ‘places for children’ are usually designed by adults, children and youth also create their own spaces/places and find meaning both inside and outside the adults-designed ‘places for children’. Students might therefore create their own spaces, either transforming the ‘adult-designed’ spaces, or stepping outside the places normally reserved for students. It might mean deliberately crossing boundaries and resisting authority; yet, it is important for the students to feel comfortable, safe and ‘at home’, especially in schools where they might feel in foreign land and uprooted from their usual places of attachment. “Place attachment” (Jack, 2010, p.757) is important for children and youth, as it represents a connection with past memories, feelings, and meanings; creating their own space would likely respond to students’ attachment needs and overall well-being.

One way to transform a given space into one's own space is to establish new rules linked to the notion of territory. Although Sebba and Churchman (1983) defined 'territorial behaviour' within the construct of the home, I also find it relevant to use in the context of a school. They define territoriality as the "behaviour of an individual (or group) claiming control over a particular area. This behaviour relates mainly to the area itself and includes the definition and marking of the area and its defence from intruders of the individual's own kind" (p.191). They argue that whilst fixed boundaries may ensure a stabilizing effect, unclear boundaries could create conflictive situations. The porosity between the different groups of the community of an international school is very much part of the school daily functioning, often governed by interdependent power relations, emotions and feelings and 'psychodynamic' forces.

2.3.8 *Psychodynamics*

The term 'psychodynamic' and in particular psychodynamic therapy is originally rooted in "Freudian emphasis on drives, the basic Freudian concepts of unconscious motivation, the influence of early development, transference, countertransference, and resistance [...]" (Corey, 2001, p.100). Yalom (2002, p. xvi) explained how 'dynamic' can refer to either a lay meaning ('power' or 'strength'), yet more especially a technical meaning (as in the 'forces' in a person that may bring about emotions or behaviour), which, Yalom wrote, occur both at conscious and unconscious levels. Dunning, James and Jones (2005) defined 'psychodynamics' as "the flow of mental forces within and between individuals and groups" (p.245) such as *splitting* and *projection*. *Splitting* is the "process of dividing feelings into differentiated elements" (Halton, 1994, p.13), and *projection* "involves locating feelings in others rather than in oneself" (Halton, 1994, p.13). 'Splitting and projection', often linked, are mechanisms of defence "against unbearable feelings" (Dunning, James & Jones, 2005, p.247). Dunning *et al.* inferred that in schools these forces are key in the organisational functioning of the school, the understanding of which is essential for gaining some awareness into students', faculty's, and staff's emotional levels. Caffyn (2013) underlined the impact of emotions and psychodynamics in an international school. Caffyn proposed a model for understanding international schools through a psychodynamic and organisational 'micropolitics' lens, and focused on the impact of emotions and cultural factors on the functioning of the school. For him, a multitude of factors such as cultural factors, practices, the private nature of international schools, and thus emotions, can all interact and impact power relations and the transgression of boundaries. "Emotional interplay on these boundaries

as border politics and organisational psychodynamics has the possibility to reinforce group structures and can project negative or positive feelings on others ” (p.209).

Chapter 5 shows how students’ (as well as parents’ and staff’s) emotional responses were often the triggers to the perception of boundary transgressions, misunderstandings, conflicts, frictions, acceptances and compromises. Emotions also worked ‘hand-in-hand’ with cognition and reflection, and contributed to the construction of a complex field of power dynamics. Caffyn (2013) added that the impact of parents’ perceived status of ‘customers’ mixed with factors attached to expatriate life can create some emotional instability in the community, a sense of vulnerability, and the crossing of boundaries. It creates a paradoxicality of power: Parents may feel empowered by their ‘customer’ position, empowered by an important social recognition, yet they may feel disempowered by a whole spectrum of factors related to living an expatriate life, and to being the parents of children who have been uprooted. This paradoxicality contributes to creating a flow of emotive and rational responses to situations.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE, PROCESS, AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY

As a counselling psychologist, I was interested in exploring students' *experiences* and *perceptions* of power relations in two international schools, and in examining how students make *sense* of these perceptions. I therefore chose to use a qualitative methodology for a study aiming to examine the meaning-making of students' perceptions and stories.

Qualitative research is about "[discovering] something about the phenomenon or its uniqueness or to investigate the rich variety of experience inherent in a setting..." (Boyatzis, 1998, p.148). "Qualitative research involves disciplined inquiry that examines people's lives, experiences and behaviours, and the stories and meanings individuals ascribe to them" (NHMRC, 2007, Ch. 3.1, p.1). As Ashworth (2015, p.4) wrote, qualitative researchers interested in psychological matters "may envisage the [participant]'s grasp of their world in terms of 'perceptions' or *meanings* (whether socially shared or idiosyncratic)".

Christensen and Prout (2002) and Harwood (2010), reported that there are typically four main approaches to undertaking research on/with children. First, studies 'on children' traditionally involve large scale observations, the child being the 'object' of the study; the researcher is doubting the children's "ability to give and receive factual information" (Christensen & Prout, p.4). These studies "have been criticised for carrying out research *on* rather than *with* children" (Barker & Wellen, 2003, p.33). Then, in 'children-centred' studies, that locate the child 'as subject', the researcher evaluates the "children's level of involvement in the research process [...] in accordance with judgements based on their cognitive abilities and social competencies" (Harwood, 2010, p.5). The third approach locates the child as 'social actor', that is the child participant is equally contributing to the construction of knowledge as the researcher. Finally, Christensen & Prout (2002) have identified a fourth perspective, the child as an 'active co-researcher', involved in the research design, the method and the analysis (Harwood, 2010). For example, SooHoo (1993) considered students as 'natural inquirers' and they participated in the structuring of research methods.

My choice of method was driven by my intent to give effect to student voice, and hear their views on potential situations of power relations. The geographical situation of FASS and especially the numerous parameters that I wished to explore and use as an (albeit flexible) framework - such as socio-cultural factors, the IB Learner Profile or the different sub-systems – led me to consider participating students as ‘social actors’ rather than co-researchers.

In order to collect my qualitative data, I considered semi-structured interviewing rather than focus groups. Focus groups are especially suited for “gaining insights into people’s shared understanding of everyday life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation” (Gibbs, 1997). This is a direct representation of group interactions taking place in focus groups, also referred to as ‘group effect’ (Carey, 1994). Theoretically, focus groups would be suited for examining group power dynamics in systems. However, as Morgan (1996, p.140) noted, “[b]ecause group interaction requires mutual self-disclosure, it is undeniable that some topics will be unacceptable for discussion [...]”. In the case of this study dealing with power relations, I felt that a group would produce a risk of disclosure and might inhibit students from sharing private and sensitive information regarding staff or school structures, for example.

Moreover, whilst students agreed to participate, it is not unreasonable to imagine that some would not be as comfortable as others to speak in front of a group; and/or be less articulate than others. This could create an intimidating situation for those students (Gibbs, 1997), a metaphor of their everyday power experiences which could, potentially, inhibit their voice.

The nature of the studied topic (perceptions of power dynamics) is sensitive in itself: Participants needed to feel safe and comfortable enough to share how and why they ‘felt’/perceived power relations. I chose interviewing, as it enables one to explore the complexity of personal experiences, and in particular semi-structured interviewing. Semi-structured interviewing is about “finding out *Why* rather than *How many* or *How much*” (Fylan, 2005, p.67). It is suited for exploring perceptions and in particular matters that may be sensitive (Barriball & While, 1994), such as power relations within an institution. Another advantage of semi-structured interviewing is the flexibility the researcher can have with participants of languages other than the interviewer’s language (Barriball & While, 1994), which was the case in this study. The interviewer can then be more careful and sensitive about the language. In reference to feelings of safety, one-

to-one interviewing created a context in which participants could not feel intimidated by other participants, or fearful of others disclosing. However, participants' perceptions of power might still be present in the relationship researcher-researched, and I come back to this point later in the 'Ethics' section.

The idea was to provide participants with a set of questions and topics to be explored and used as a catalyst so that they could develop their responses further if they felt they needed to. I used flexible structured interviews for staff, as the information desired was to provide an informative background for a better understanding of the schools' protocols and mechanisms, as well as clarifying how staff viewed power dynamics in their respective schools. Staff time was also more limited due to staff being very busy. I come back to these specific points in greater detail in the 'Interviewing Section'.

I chose to undertake my study in international schools for which I have a wide experience both as a teacher and counsellor. I thus felt it was pertinent to explore perceptions and meanings from two schools which could provide at the same time some common patterns and some individualities. I need to clarify that this is not a comparative study of power dynamics between two international schools. The study, on the contrary, aims to embrace these differences and commonalities to enrich and illuminate the debate on the micro-politics of power in international schools.

3.2 SAMPLE

The research thus took place in two schools with a similar philosophy and vision, for the overarching purpose was to examine power relationships in an international school that implements at least one IB programme. The two sample schools are the French-American School of Sutton - FASS, in the United States, where I undertook a prior study (Leclerc, 2015), and Braville International School of France - BISF, an international school in France. These names are pseudonyms to respect confidentiality. Both schools cater to an international population as well as to a local population, and each school's mission is to respond to the educational needs of students from multicultural backgrounds and eventually prepare students for the International Baccalaureate. They both follow the ethos of the IBO. Other similar parameters include the urban location of the schools and the French and international populations of both schools, albeit in different proportions. I detail further common points and differences in Chapter Four.

My initial idea for a study was to consider French families who had some understanding and experience of the French state system and who had transferred their children from a state school to a private international school. My objective was originally to highlight the possible impact of a child's transfer to an international school on the way the family relates to the school. I was especially interested in examining how a family value system may change in this new context. As shown in the Sutton study (Leclerc, 2015), parental involvement appears to be dependent (in part) upon the professional, intergenerational and socio-cultural story of the family. The Sutton study also suggested that the context of an international school may lead to an overlapping of boundaries between the different sub-systems of the school community, the school staff/faculty, students and parents. Students subsequently experience power relationships between respective school members in a particular way, and in a way that might be potentially different from what it would be in a state school. Parents' relationship with their children's school has been shown to be linked to the family narratives and to their mobility. This is the case in rural areas (Jean, 2007) where parents construct their relationship with their child's school on their own past experiences, either negative or positive, and in the "continuity of the family heritage" (p.94, my translation). Jean added that the "mobility and social reconfiguration of the families" (p.9, my translation) has an impact on the evolution of this relationship. In the case of international schools, the urban/rural context is not characteristic. Parental populations are usually not recognized by their rural or urban origin, but rather by their country of origin, their language, their profession, and the mobility takes a more global dimension. However, the pertinence of the impact of family narratives within a particular environmental context on the relationship between parents and schools still needs to be recognized and examined.

I came to realize that a comparative study (family experiences in state schools *versus* in international schools) could in fact be one stand-alone study, and the study of power perceptions another. I chose to focus on the latter. The reason for this is that my focus of interest remains the study of students' *current* perceptions of power. Initially, I had envisaged considering parents' perspectives as well as students', as I did for the Sutton study. It originally made sense, in that parents would have given me their perspectives on their own participation in their children's studies, the way they envision their relationship with their child's school, and their own experiences of what an international school feels like to them. This would have potentially informed me in the drawing of a

comprehensive picture of home-school dynamics and power relations. However, my main interest lies in studying power differentials felt by students and how these power differentials can be generated or impacted by factors coming from either within or outside school. It made sense, therefore, to focus solely on the students' perspectives rather than on both the parents' and the students' perspectives.

For this qualitative research, my intention was to interview a total of about twenty Grade 10 (15-16 year olds) and Grade 11 (16-17 year olds) French and international students from both schools. The idea was to interview students older than those interviewed for the Sutton study (G7 and G8). The reason for this change was three-fold: First, I was interested in hearing perspectives from a different age range compared to the prior study. Second, the prior study was geared towards students *and* parents; parents of younger students are more physically present in school, and this was a facet I was studying then. Third, in my experience as a counsellor, 15 to 17 year olds are the population who are the most sensitive to, and the most vocal about, power differences and power relations. Craig & Dunn (2007) underlined the need that adolescents have for independence, and in particular how adolescents gradually develop the concepts of self-regulation and interdependence, "reevaluat[ing] the rules, values, and boundaries that they experienced as children at home and at school" (p.333). Kloep, Hendry, Taylor and Stuart-Hamilton (2016) spoke of starting university as being the time of many changes and figuring out life transitions such as developing independence and acquiring autonomous learning skills. Thus, I chose two consecutive year groups, Grade 10 (Middle School at BISF and Lower-Upper School at FASS) - which follows a more general programme preparing students for the Diploma Programme, and Grade 11 (Diploma Programme, more commonly called DP) – a programme that aims at preparing students for their entry to University.

The main 'technical' differences that may have an impact on power relations are that G10 students have a full timetable (with mostly mandatory subjects) whilst G11 students have been able to choose their six subjects (within certain parameters), and benefit from study (free) periods. Lastly, G11 students benefit from more autonomy of movement and profit from having a student lounge, which G10 students do not have. An additional reason for choosing these two years is that I wanted to hear the perspective of students who moved from one type of programme (Middle School Programmes) to another (DP programme). Some of the G11 students have already experienced the change, and G10 are looking forward to the changes.

Mason (2010) suggested that in qualitative research, “samples must be large enough to assure that most or all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered, but at the same time if the sample is too large data becomes repetitive and eventually, superfluous” (p.2). Gentles, Charles, Ploeg and McKibbin (2015) explained that it is often difficult to pre-judge the right number for a sample in a qualitative study before the collection actually starts, yet that a sample of between ten and thirty is regularly used in qualitative research. I felt that interviewing a sample of twenty students out of about 160 students (for both schools, and both years) with a flexible framework of questions would be neither too large to be manageable nor too small to provide significant insight, and hopefully would facilitate an understanding of a whole range of experiences from different advisory rooms, and with different teachers. Prior to interviewing the students, I interviewed nine members of staff from both administrative teams. From my interviews with the Heads, directors and supervisors, I aimed at gaining background knowledge of the systems (such as homework processes, communication systems and the process and mission of the Diploma) and the views of staff on students’ voice and power in school. Admissions staff were to provide an overview of the different populations in their respective schools, as well as insight into parental rationale/justifications for choosing those particular schools for their children. Four members of staff from FASS agreed to participate: The Head of School; the Secondary School Director (SSD); the IB Diploma coordinator; and the Admissions Director. Five members of staff from BISF agreed to take part in the study: the Head of School; the Secondary School Director; the Deputy-Head for pastoral matters; the IB Diploma coordinator; and the Admissions Director (see Table 1).

FASS	Nationality	BISF	Nationality
Admissions Director	Germany	Admissions Director	USA
Head of School	USA	Head of School	UK
Secondary School Director	France	Secondary School Director	UK
IB Coordinator	USA	Deputy-Head for Pastoral Matters	UK
		IB Coordinator	UK

Table 1– Staff participants

3.3 PROCESS

3.3.1 Access And Gate-Keeping

Once the decision was taken to opt for a sample of G10 and G11 students and I identified the members of staff I wanted to interview, I contacted by email each Head of School to respectfully request authorization to conduct a study in their establishment. The Heads were provided with an information leaflet, attached to the email, and a consent form.

After authorisation from the Heads and from the University's Ethical Board, I determined which staff member ('email-sender') would be the most appropriate person to send invitations to students and parents. The purpose was to avoid potential conflict of interest, having had -and still having- professional connections with both schools, FASS and BISF. I thus contacted one member of the Tech team at BISF, and the Students' Supervisor at FASS, to ask if each would agree; after agreement, the 'email-senders' subsequently sent an invitation email that I had previously drafted, with an information leaflet explaining the study, goals, objectives and methodology of the research, as well as electronic consent forms to students and parents for students under the age of 16.

It is to be noted that interviewing at BISF (France) was local and took place at the school. For FASS (USA), I contacted the Head of School by email, as well as the Secondary School Director, in order to arrange interviewing at the staff's convenience because of the distance. Having undertaken a prior study at FASS (Leclerc, 2015), the contacts were open and friendly. For members of staff, I proposed different interviewing options such as face-to-face Skyping, a phone conversation, or face-to-face interviewing in the USA; I suggested face-to-face interviewing *in situ* for the youth. The FASS Admissions interview eventually took place over the phone, but the recording of the data was difficult. I subsequently chose to complete all of the remaining interviews in person and arranged interviews *in situ* at the school. However, the distance initially proved to be a barrier prior to the visit, which slowed down the arrangement of interviews, and I had to rely on the goodwill of some staff to send invitations for interviews on my behalf, and follow through until my arrival in the USA. The main issue was to mobilize and keep up the interest of teenage participants weeks ahead of the interviews, whilst remaining ethical (i.e. not over-exerting pressure), and

ensuring the ethical collection of authorisations. Once on site, the arrangement became easier to finalize.

FASS students received the first invitation during a week of examinations. It was not the best possible timing, and I received only one acceptance from a student and a small number of emails from parents. The Tech member of staff sent a reminder of the email package a second time which turned out to be more successful.

The final number of student participants was eighteen. Fourteen Grade 10 and Grade 11 students of both genders from BISF in France were interviewed, (five in French and nine in English), and four Grade 10 and Grade 11 students from FASS in the USA (three in French and one in English) with an overwhelming majority being girls (see Table 2 for the breakdown of nationalities, grades and gender). Whilst I do not have the space here nor the focus to explore further the gender difference, one cannot dismiss it. Girls might have more interest in participating in a research study and/or have more interest in expressing their views about power due to potential personal experiences. I purposefully did not engage with any of the participants in any questions related to the other participants for confidentiality purposes, whatever they might be, and therefore did not broach the gender subject with any of them. All students who volunteered were over 16, and therefore no parental consent forms were needed.

NOM	Grade	Gender	SCHOOL	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Language used during interview
Célia	11	F	FASS	France	French
Chloé	11	F	FASS	France	French
Fanny	11	F	FASS	USA	English
Matthieu	11	M	FASS	France	French
Agnès	10	F	BISF	Bulgaria	English
Camila	10	F	BISF	Canada	English
Dreide	11	F	BISF	Slovenia	French
Frances	11	F	BISF	UK	English
Henriet	11	F	BISF	Bulgaria	English
Iris	11	F	BISF	France	French
Joanna	10	F	BISF	Trinidad	English
Ju-lieta	11	F	BISF	Singapore	French
Léo	10	M	BISF	France	French
Maria	10	F	BISF	Trinidad	English
Sara	11	F	BISF	France	French
Silvia	11	F	BISF	Luxembourg	English
Valeria	11	F	BISF	Venezuela	English
Yasmina	11	F	BISF	Pakistan	English

Table 2 – Distribution of student participants

The imbalance in the number of participants from each school was due to FASS being far from my current professional location, and the difficulty in delegating the appeal for participants in an ethical way. In effect, I was hesitant as to how many reminders I should send the email-sender (the students' supervisor), not wanting to overstep my privilege to undertake a study. Moreover, I knew how busy he was, and it did not feel right to put any pressure on him nor contact someone else, as he had kindly committed to launch the search for participants. Lastly, it was not ethical to directly contact potential student participants. However, it is to be noted that the ratio of participants/overall students is similar for both schools, around 10% of the age group for each school.

I made the decision to carry through with the initial choice of considering FASS, despite the likelihood of obtaining a small number of student participants. The first reason for this was that I had findings from the first institutionally-focused study which were relevant to this study (Leclerc, 2015). The second was that I was eager to collect data from two similar institutions, with staff from different cultural profiles, and potentially different pedagogies. This was especially salient considering the different nationality of both SSDs. At FASS, the SSD is of French nationality, and other administrative leadership members of staff are mostly American; whilst at BISF, the SSD and all other leadership members of the staff who participated in the research were British. I was curious to examine if students had feelings about, and insights into, these cultural differences and whether these feelings had an impact on their perceptions of power dynamics.

3.3.2 Interviewing

Interviewing staff

The reason for starting to interview the members of staff first, and as early as possible, was a pragmatic one, as I needed to allow for times when they would not necessarily be available. The data collection from staff occurred in two phases: first, interviews with Admissions from each school to obtain statistics and feedback from the Admissions process (one over the phone for the US school, and a face-to-face for the school in France); and second, face-to-face interviews with administrative staff from each school. All administrative interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. The main line of questioning was the same for both schools, despite some individualization depending on

the school and the position of responsibility of each staff member (see Appendix C – Staff interview questions).

There was no deliberate intention to interview the members of staff *before* students, nor did I want to adapt the students' interviewing process depending on what the staff members would say, for I wanted to hear the students' perceptions without any leading questions; however, I cannot completely rule out having been influenced and informed in my questioning. It must be said that staff interviews were spread over a long period of time, and therefore several students' interviews took place concurrently with the staff interviews.

Interviewing students

The initial idea was to collect data from students in two ways: first, using semi-structured interviews lasting roughly between 30 and 45 minutes, with a 45-minute maximum (roughly the time of a class). Second, giving students the option to produce some creative product executed by themselves (poem, photo, picture etc.). In the information package, students were invited to bring to the interview some form of expression to illustrate their views, or to be used as an optional support, something created prior to the study or for the study. It was not mandatory. The creative idea had originated from previous counselling sessions when students would share with me a poem, a song, a diary, a picture, to either convey emotions, share anger or sadness, or simply illustrate a point. However, whereas students were invited to bring in some creative expression, none of them did in either school. The context, I came to realize, was different, in that a study interview is not a counselling session. Being interviewed brought some formality and structure to the process (even though students were made to feel comfortable). I did not query the fact that no creative work was produced so as to not induce any uncomfortable feelings in the students. Thus, the data was finally generated solely from the semi-structured interviews and without any creative product. The flow of the interviews was fluid and fairly disinhibited, and it is quite possible that students actually shared more information without focusing too much on art or literary work. I am unsure as to what kind of effect on the data having students *not* bring any creative products has caused, or what might have been missed. However, students appeared to not need, or not have to rely on, creativity to express themselves freely, and I respected their own choice of voice.

Students were presented with the aim of the research, and the questions were the same for both grades, G10 and G11, with a particular emphasis on questions regarding the main differences between the two grades (study periods and student lounge only for G11/12, teaching independent learning skills, etc.). Students were not given any oriented definition of power prior to the interviews, as I was interested in hearing the expression of their own understanding of power, and especially in how it impacts them. Students were thus provided with a framework of concrete questions aimed at investigating their rapport with authority, how they experience constraints, and what they do about it. They were invited to include feelings coming from being the recipient of an exercise of power and feelings from being empowered.

The interviews primarily targeted three domains: homework processes; communication between students, parents and school staff; and the management of time and space including attendance, punctuality, and security and safety. These domains were chosen because, first, I felt they could give some insight into students' experience of daily school life; second, I felt these areas were specifically conjecturable to themes of authority and power relations; and lastly, I felt that having themes would provide students with a structure should they need it. Whilst these themes provided a structure, they left space for more general questions which covered areas such as parental involvement, the integration and development of independent learning skills, the perception of hierarchical levels and power games, the feeling of territoriality and perceptions of international and cross-cultural parameters. This initial framework was not intended to limit and restrain the flow of the students' thoughts, but to serve, on the contrary, as a catalyst. Interviews were deliberately conducted in a flexible, fluid, conversational way in order to let students develop in greater depth what felt most meaningful to them. Whenever necessary, students were asked to reframe, develop, or clarify obscure points, or to expand their answers if they felt it necessary. The interviews did not systematically follow the sequence as indicated here, which explains, in part, why the patterns, then the themes, are not sequential. The focus of participants' responses often resulted in some areas being developed more than others. This was essential to respect, for the importance placed by the participants on particular subjects was of significance and symbolic of what was meaningful to them as individuals (See Appendix D for the interview questions).

Students were asked to reflect and think 'systemically', that is across the three main sub-systems of each school (parents, staff and faculty, and themselves), with each sub-

system being interconnected with one another (see Fig. 1). The sub-systems identified for this study are: the ‘students sub-system’, the ‘parents/guardians sub-system’, and the ‘teachers and administrative staff’ sub-system. This division follows a traditional arrangement of social worlds and boundaries of authority: The school leadership and teachers have ultimate authority over students, parents have authority over their children and so forth. However, these divisions are not necessarily congruent with other, different sub-systems that also share an esoteric or common meaning: For instance, students and parents are part of the ‘family’ sub-group. Students and teachers are part of the same ‘pedagogical’ group (the ‘classroom actors’ - teachers and learners). Parents and staff are the adults. I chose to select the sub-groups/sub-systems, according to boundaries of territories of hierarchies of power, based on evaluation, educational and administrative codes.

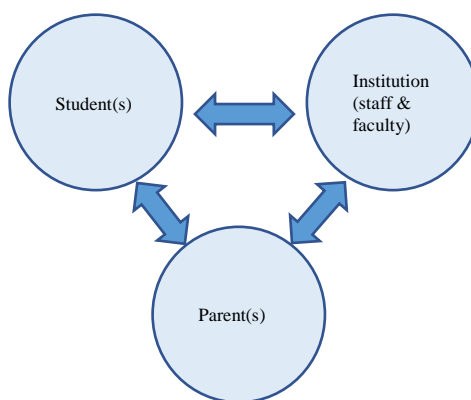


Fig. 1 Triangular model of power relations across the three main sub-systems

All interviews (staff and students) were audio-taped according to ethical guidelines, described in the ‘Ethics’ section below. The audio-taping made the interviewing flexible and the “nuances of the interactions [...] (e.g. intonations, pauses) help[ed] validate the accuracy and completeness of the information collected” (Barriball & While, 1994, p.332). The recordings were then entirely transcribed by myself, paying attention to the accuracy of the transcripts, and making note of paralinguistics if need be.

3.3.3 Ethics

Ensuring gate-keepers' authorisations, calling for participants, and interviews were all conducted to comply with King's College Research Ethics Committee ethical standards for a low-risk application.

The first ethical issue concerns the respect of anonymity. All names of students and staff are pseudonyms to respect anonymity, and their nationalities have been adapted where they might have been identified from their country of origin; whilst I used pseudo names, I chose alternative countries that were geographically close, whose language had common roots, and whose Power Distance Index (Hofstede, G. *et al.*, 2010, see Appendix B) was the same or very similar, in order to keep to cultural schemas as close as possible. Staff and students from any one of the United Kingdom countries are said to be from the UK. The nationalities of USA and France have been maintained to give a more accurate representation of potential cultural and relational issues. The location of the schools has been broadened to the whole country (USA and France), but certain parameters essential for the analysis have been kept such as being city schools, and the socio-economic and cultural profile of both populations. In France, there are about eighteen major and smaller international and/or bilingual schools that prepare the IBDP (IB Diploma) in rural and urban areas (John Catt Educational Ltd, 2001-2018); and in the USA, there are about ten international/bilingual schools with a French component for secondary school age students that prepare either the IB DP or IB components for Middle Years (John Catt Educational Ltd, 2001-2018). The names of positions of the members of staff have been changed to reduce the risk of recognizing organisations.

The second ethical issue refers to the age of the students. I paid close attention to ensure that there was no pressure exerted over students to participate; that they knew they could withdraw at any time, and that their participation (or non-participation), or wish to withdraw, would have no consequences on their future schooling. All students were invited to discuss the study with their parents, even the over-16s, but the latter were not required to obtain their parents' consent to participate. Parents of any student under 16 authorizing their children to participate and whose children were interested in the study, were asked to contact me by email or in any other way. I responded to parents' emails and invited them to come in to meet me for further clarification if they wished to do so. The parents who responded were eager for their children to participate,

and one approached me to discuss the study further. In the end, as mentioned earlier, only over-16 students participated, and no parental consent was necessary.

The third ethical issue that I needed to clarify and resolve concerned the interviews themselves. It was absolutely paramount to ensure that participants knew that I would respect confidentiality save the necessity to report according to child protection guidelines, or if the participant was “perceived as being at risk of harm” (Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2008, p.419); this was explained to all participating students. This point was clarified in the information package, but I also reiterated this at the beginning of the interviews.

Some participants were hesitant before expressing their grievances and complaints about the ‘school’ (about administration, teachers, and homework) for fear of my reporting it. Even though this was made clear, there were times when students were still hesitant. This happened seldom, and required my stating confidentiality protocols and reassuring the students that they were under no obligation to reveal anything. Their resistance could actually be interpreted as a metaphor for their perception of power differential between administration and themselves, and ‘grist for the mill’ with regards to power relations and power distance between students and staff. This was a stage when being a professional counsellor was useful in making participants feel comfortable and safe, reassured that the information they provided would not be reported. Whilst the confidentiality has extended to the present day, I do not exclude reporting to the schools useful information regarding power dynamics and student voice, albeit respecting ethics and paying attention to not revealing participants’ identity, or ways to determine their identity.

The fourth ethical issue is linked to the above. It arose from my being and having previously been a staff member at FASS and BISF, both times as the school counsellor. I was therefore both the researcher and a staff member - albeit a past staff member at FASS. I need to add here that all student participants from FASS had not been previously interviewed for the prior study (Leclerc, 2015). The first implication was technical and was related to the process of getting participants, as explained earlier. The ethical dilemma was to draw interest amongst students without being too forceful and by respecting ethics. The second implication concerned the fact that the students knew me as a school counsellor. This was especially potentially problematic at BISF, as I

mostly work with junior and senior students, and most knew me as the counsellor (even if the majority had never worked directly with me). Being interviewed by the counsellor could cause them to be conflicted. In effect, students who usually would consult the counsellor would present some kind of issue, such as emotional, psychological, relational, or behavioural. There is thus a ‘narrative’ attached to being ‘interviewed’ by a counsellor, and this might have caused some discomfort. I chose to interview them in my office (for BISF) as it is a comfortable, friendly space, and in various staff’s offices for FASS. I always asked students if they were comfortable enough in the respective rooms. All of the BISF students felt fine being interviewed in my office (which has a friendly environment), and none seemed to be uncomfortable being interviewed by the counsellor. This brings the issue of my own positionality of power, as BISF students were “in my territory”, rather than in a neutral space, and interviewed by a member of staff – seemingly representing power, or carrying an aura of power. However, my position of counsellor in the Upper Schools was/is more based on guidance and adjustment counselling than behaviour interventions. This mitigated the position of power. The advantage was that I was known by most students, even if they had never talked to me previously for counselling reasons. My purpose here was therefore to ensure that the students felt comfortable during the interviews, to clarify the role and purpose of the study, and to confirm that the study was independent of my counselling job. As a psychologist, I have “an interest in the way that people think and feel” (Fylan, 2005, p.65). My counselling experience and mindset helped me evaluate potential risks and ensure that students felt safe throughout the interviews.

To illustrate this point: one student participant started crying quietly during an interview, as she was sharing with me the pressure she felt from her parents about her academic choices. It was a point where I had to acknowledge her pain, support her through it, and yet allow her to continue the interview without feeling inadequate, and feeling empowered, all of it without creating an ambiguous rapport counsellor vs researcher for the student, as I did not want her to feel ill at ease or feel that she was failing in her ‘interviewee competency’, should she have felt that I switched from being a researcher to being a counsellor.

The fifth ethical issue is related to my own positionality and potential biases. Being French was an advantage in that Francophone/French participants could possibly feel comfortable linguistically and/or culturally. I had to be careful though with my own

potential cultural biases which could have coloured my questions and reactions during the interviews. A similar phenomenon could happen with my own history as an expatriate, or being a female with my own life story of power relations.

The final ethical issue is about the creative product that I invited students to bring to the interview. The creative piece eventually became redundant, yet the ethical issue was pertinent at the time of composing and sending the invitations. One had to be mindful of the way the invitation to produce a creative form would be received and perceived by students. First of all, students may be very busy and have little time to produce some creative output. Second, they may perceive this invitation as an unwelcome request, an imposition, or a piece of homework at best, and could be resistant to this section of the data collection. Furthermore, one had to take into consideration the age of the students, and the use of drawings may be seen as something too infantile for teenagers. The last concern was the fear of creating a feeling of inauthenticity, and a possibly artificial and fragmented collection of data.

I addressed this issue by extending the creative choice with the possibility to provide a creative product. However, I did not want this option to deter uncreative students from participating should they wish to, so I insisted that it was optional. My interpretative feeling is that students did not 'buy' this optional creative offer because it either did not feel 'right' or I may not have sold it strongly enough (which I did not want to do for ethical reasons). Whilst the student participants were not co-researchers, I respected their choice to not comply. By doing so, students also showed that they both felt safe and empowered to do so.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The research method used to analyse the qualitative data in this study is Thematic Analysis (TA). "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.6), "a process for encoding qualitative information" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.vi). I had originally planned to use Grounded Theory (Strauss, A. & Corbin, J., 1998), analysing collected data from semi-structured interviews with both staff and students: "[Grounded Theory] mean[s] theory that [is] derived from data, systematically gathered and analysed through the research process. [...] The researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to

emerge from the data” (p.12). However, whilst the method I used to code, identify themes and analyse the data is reminiscent of Grounded Theory, my approach differed in that my goal was not to necessarily “generate a plausible - and useful - theory of the phenomena” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 8), but to share innovative ideas, reflections, patterns of thoughts and recurrent stories.

My study was driven by an original interest in power dynamics between students, staff and parents within the framework of an international school, and I chose three main areas to examine through data collected in both schools. The process of data analysis was much more a ‘top-down’ than a ‘bottom-up’ process. I thus chose a ‘theoretical’ TA that is “driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytical interest in the area” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.12). In TA, themes are identified on one of two levels, either semantic/explicit or latent/interpretative (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Whilst an analysis at a semantic level does not go further than what the participant shares, the latent level goes for the hidden meaning and ideas, “underlying the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p.vii). As I am interested in how students *perceive* power relations and power ‘games’, and am curious to examine how the interdependence of sub-systems might generate new and original power dynamics, I am using the theoretical thematic approach, with the analysis at a latent level.

The next step consisted of gathering the staff and student data. I undertook ‘flexible’ structured interviews for staff, with the aim of getting background information and of presenting the collected information in a factual way. I used semi-structured interviews for students, the style of interviewing usually used in TA (Joffe, 2012).

I then skim-read the student transcripts a first time, in order to get a feel for the data. I then read the transcripts a second time to immerse myself in the content (‘repeated reading’ being a characteristic of TA (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.17), and started to code the data by making annotations in the transcripts (see Appendices J and Jbis). I also checked at this point any potential transcript errors for further rectification. I then read the transcripts a third time to start coding in greater detail.

As I read through the students’ transcripts, I made a note of all broad situations or loci, sometimes concepts, that touched upon any form of perceived power relation, whether they concerned the students themselves, friends, parents, teachers, administrative staff, and even the IB organization. I made no discriminatory choice at this stage (that is, I did not categorize according to the initial domains - homework, communication and time and space), in order to avoid missing connections and broader concepts. Examples

of ‘broad situations’ were when students feel their space and time are controlled; or when they appreciate the structure; or when they acknowledge the usefulness of rules. I bookmarked these situations or loci of interest with colour stickers, further annotations, and visual diagrams to help me in identifying patterns and to facilitate the analysis. The following step was to draw a series of themes from this complex fabric of situations, ideas, perceptions, concepts and narratives, identifying themes which specifically highlighted power relationships. Several situations were linked to a common theme or concept, hence selecting themes was more relevant to the analysis than analysing the numerous situations, some of which were overlapping. To illustrate this stage of this process, for example, I grouped the situations relating to constraints or occupation of space under ‘*territory and ownership of territory and control of space*’. The appreciation of structure by students, their acknowledging the usefulness of rules, or at least their ambivalence about rules and structure, was grouped under the theme ‘*I don’t like rules, but I do*’. Further, the complicity between parents and their children, between teachers and students, or even between teachers, was grouped under the theme ‘*Alliances*’. I generated from this process a list of twenty-four conceptual, initial themes (see Appendix Jter) which I then streamlined and categorized into twenty-one themes following the sequence of the four initial objectives (Table 3 - Themes): the IB philosophy, LP and academic matters attached to the IB; the characteristics of international schools and impact on students’ lives; students’ perceptions of authority, power legitimacy and differentials; and their response to power relations. The final stage was to develop the themes further into longer ‘units’ by analysing the transcripts and establishing links between them, and subsequently to develop a narrative telling the students’ story of their perception of power in their respective schools. This will be developed in Chapters Five and Six. Before reporting and analysing the students’ data, I begin in Chapter Four with the staff data in order to provide some informative background for the analysis of the students’ data.

#	Themes related to 1 st objective (IB philosophy / Learner Profile)	#	Themes related to 2 nd objective (ISc characteristics and impact on students' lives)	#	Themes related to 3 rd objective (perception of authority, power legitimacy and power differentials)	#	Themes related to 4 th objective (responses to power relations)
1	Knowledge of the IB programme	4	Communication home-school	8	What power means	17	I reclaim, I negotiate, I avoid, I resist
2	Autonomy of learning	5	Boundaries home-school-Students	9	Importance of power	18	I trust you
3	Homework matters	6	Intercultural paradigms and relationships	10	I don't like rules, but I do	19	Let me know first
		7	Business/private nature of schools	11	I can't do this, I can't do that	20	Power by proxy
				12	Power in the in-betweens	21	Alliances, and dual roles
				13	Territoriality, territoriality ownership and control of space		
				14	Different ways to exercise power, constraints and tasks		
				15	Hierarchy of power levels		
				16	Student's voice		

Table 3: Themes

CHAPTER FOUR

STAFF DATA: STRUCTURES AND THE SCHOOLS' VISIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides context within which the students' data is further analysed. It presents a summary of the data collected from interviews with the members of staff. One of the goals of this section is to present the profiles of the populations of the schools as well as the institutional systems in place. I believe it is also essential to represent some of the staff's perspectives about students' voice and parental intervention, and power, for they constitute, together with the institutional mechanisms of power, the 'school truth' that students perceive, navigate through and respond to. I divide the findings into three sections: 1. The Admissions data -Table 4; 2. The Heads' and SSDs' vision of power and students' voice – Table 5; and the schools' mechanisms of power – Table 6; and 3. The IB coordinators' perspectives on the IB philosophy and independent learning - Table 7. As previously mentioned, this thesis is not a comparative study of FASS with BISF. However, I am presenting the findings parallel to one another in each table for more clarity.

Table 4 shows a summary of the interviews with both sets of Admissions. It shows the respective populations of the schools, the parents' reasons for joining the school, their socio-cultural backgrounds and expectations. This information intends to give context to intercultural dynamics and general power relations.

Table 5 presents the results from the interviews with the Heads of School and the SSDs. It highlights their overall vision on power, students' voice, and parental involvement. Having some insight into administrative leaders' vision is important as it puts into perspective the students' perceptions of hierarchy and potentially explains students' responses to exercises of power.

Table 6 lists the 'mechanisms of power' implemented in both schools: pastoral policies, rules and general procedures that regulate and direct students' behaviours and movements, and maintain and promote students' well-being; communication between the school staff, the students and their parents; and finally, I summarize the administrative leaders' vision of homework and assessment procedures. The goal is not

to verify whether or not the students know the procedures but to provide some background information before analysing and discussing the students' data.

Table 7 presents insights from the IB coordinators shedding light on the IB philosophy, which is particularly helpful in clarifying how certain concepts, such as independent learning, are conceived and integrated in students' learning.

4.2 ADMISSIONS' DATA

Both BISF and FASS were founded decades ago in France and in the USA respectively to provide an education for expatriate families. FASS originally addressed the needs of the children of French expatriate families in America. BISF did the same for Anglophone expatriate families in France. In that sense, BISF and FASS both fit the "Type A international school" criteria as mentioned in Chapter Two, that is, a school addressing the educational needs of expatriate families. However, as the schools developed, they also took on some of the characteristics of "Type B ideological" and "Type C non-traditional" schools (elite English-medium education).

The curriculum of international schools adapts in general to the missions of the schools and the local needs. This is what happened at both FASS and BISF. FASS has gone from a bilingual French-American education to a hybrid system made up of French-English bilingual education, French Baccalaureate, and International Baccalaureate education. BISF has also evolved and is now uniquely preparing students for the International Baccalaureate.

Both schools have many similarities, as seen previously in the 'Sample' section: the international nature of the schools with their multicultural diversity and IB programme; the teaching in English; the French components; substantial proportions of French and American families (2/3 of FASS families are either French or American, and 1/3 of BISF families are either French or American); similar social class backgrounds (the vast majority of the FASS and BISF parents are middle-class to upper-middle class parents); reasons for attending the schools; and the urban environment. Differences include the geographical position (one school is in the USA and one is in France), there are some differences in the curricula, and different rationales for attending the schools. In effect, one of the main differences concerns the French population of students. At BISF, many French students come from the French system after a poor experience in the state system; for them, BISF represents a second chance. FASS French students, on the other

hand, come to the school because their parents are expatriate professionals, and they often (not always) have a history of academic success. These differences between the French students' motivation and expectations may be an important factor in the way students perceive relationships and power dynamics. Once in school, students are taught in English - as well as French at FASS -. English may not be their native language, taught by teachers who may be from a culture different to theirs, with different cultural dimensions, according to Hofstede, G. *et al.*'s model (2010). The contrast in ranking in Power Distance Index (PDI) between Anglophone teachers and leaders and Francophone teachers is quite significant. Anglophone staff coming from Northern/Western Europe and the 'Anglo World' as defined by Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010, pp. 57-59), such as the USA, Canada, and the UK, rank on the PDI between the 59th and 67th position (that is low on the global rank with a small PD). Most Francophone teachers coming from Northern/Western Europe (e.g. France) rank around the 30th position, which shows a larger PD than the Anglophone countries. This might mean a difference in pedagogical approach in the staff communication with students, and also between staff themselves. Finally, the interval between the participants' highest PDI (Venezuela, 81) and smallest PDI (UK and Germany, 35) is quite large (Appendix B), which indicates the potentiality and complexity of a large variety of cultural responses to situations of power between staff and students. As will be reported below, Heads of School suggest that parental cultural and worldview differences may explain power dynamics not only between staff and students, but also between all the different stakeholders.

Both schools are private, not-for-profit organizations. BISF is registered as an association governed by a Board of Trustees, and parents are its members; whilst parents, enterprises and embassies pay for the children's education, parents and guardians are not considered officially as clients or customers. FASS is a corporation, also governed by a Board of Trustees; some parents belong to educational and strategic committees, yet parents are talked about by the administration as customers. The reality is that in order to function and be competitive, the schools need healthy enrolments and need to retain their students as much as feasible, taking into account normal exits due to the temporary nature of some of the parents' postings. There is therefore the necessity to be attractive and to be performing successfully.

Admissions Directors were asked if they were aware of any power dynamics prior to entering their own school, and whether there were parental expectations which could

possibly explain a dissonance later on between families' expectations and the school's discourse. They both related occasional pressures related to money (such as 'if I pay, I should be guaranteed a place'), and influential pressure from enterprises and embassies (such as expecting the school to accept families because of the past history of acceptance with those enterprises etc.). Lastly, there was a latent understanding that a customer can 'buy' anything, as reported by the Admissions director from BISF, talking about a generic prospective parent: "From time to time, it's like a power game...I am the client, so from the moment that I decide I want something related to education, I buy it..." . It is necessary to clarify that not all families at FASS and BISF come from privileged socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds; yet the majority do, as listed in Table 4. Financially-privileged and stable families have the choice to opt for a high-cost private education; they are also in a position to provide their children with high quality technology, privileged practical facilities (such as transport to school), pocket money, contacts for internships, option of choosing expensive college careers; and, as seen above, may possess a customer mindset which might lead to expectations and demands. The findings will show that this mindset is at times objectified in the relationships between students, parents and staff, and becomes one aspect of the habitus (and to some respect, culture) of the schools. However, the students' interviews seem to point towards incongruences in the socio-cultural reproduction of the cultural and economic capitals, as theorized by Bourdieu. Moreover, and as explained earlier (Mills, 2008), the findings might point towards a transformative potential of the cultural and economic capitals by the schools.

	FASS (USA)	BISF (France)
Proportion of nationalities and size of (Upper) Secondary School	-1/3 American families, 1/3 French families, and 1/3 international families -Many French and American families are bi-nationals -About 50 nationalities -Average length of stay in school: 5 years -Number of G10 to G12 students: about 100	-1/6 French families, 1/6 American families -2/3 are international families -About 55 nationalities -Average length of stay in school: 3.25 years -Number of G10 to G12 students: about 180

Social class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Middle to middle-upper social class -Parents usually occupy positions in diplomatic, business, entrepreneurial, academic milieus -Teachers' children -Children from low social class who benefit from grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Middle to middle-upper social class -Parents usually occupy positions in diplomatic, business, artistic, entrepreneurial milieus -Teachers' children and children from embassy families and businesses from lower ranks, and low-middle social class.
Reasons given by French families to attend the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuation of the French system in order to be able to return to France - French system with English teaching -IB system: small classes, close relationships between staff and families. -Attention to students. -Sensitivity towards international mindedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students failed in the French system and the international system is attractive -English language -IB system: small classes, close relationships between staff and families. -Attention to students. -Opportunity to go to a good university abroad -Short-term project -Sensitivity towards international mindedness
What students like/expect when they apply to the school, and/or visit the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social life -Reputation of friendly school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social life -Facilities -Joining friends (for French locals)
What families expect from school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Good academics -Information about Parent-Teacher Alliance/ (PTA), how to get involved -Same academic expectations whether they pay for the school or not (or how much they do) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Good rapport and communication with staff -PTA -Parental influence/power in school

Table 4 – Admissions data

4.3 ADMINISTRATORS' VISION OF POWER AND MECHANISMS OF POWER

Information collected from the staff interviews is presented in Table 5, and has been organized following themes that cover: the vision members of staff have of student voice; the organizational structures in place that develop student voice (or that they would like to develop further); their understanding of parental power; and their global vision of power in their respective school.

What resulted from the interviews with both schools' administrators (Heads and SSDs) is that there is common agreement on the value of student and parental voices. The Head at BISF felt that there *are* structures in place for student participation, yet believed

there “aren’t very deep roots in terms of student participation and students being able to actually affect policy changes”, such as the Student Council, which does not possess much power, adding “it’s slightly bizarre for any school to be making decisions on behalf of young people without proper processes of consultation”. There are a few mechanisms that enable students to express their opinion (see Table 5), yet both the Head of School and the SSD believed that they are not as effective as they could be. The Heads and the SSDs mentioned other elements that influence school power dynamics. These factors, such as socio-economics, cultural background, emotions, are outside their realm but they still have to consider them in their school management. For instance, the Head at FASS associates the ‘supply and demand’ with parental power: Parents who believe that their patronage (i.e. tuition fees) matters for the school business believe that they have (collective) power, as opposed to the power a large donor would have. The Head then mentioned a case where over one hundred non-American parents got together to complain to the Board about one particular member of staff, adding that non-American parents do not understand private school governance. He summarizes:

If the school [...] feels in a [...] more fragile position in terms of enrolment and finance, [...] the school feels less empowered vis-à-vis the parents, because you got to keep the parents happy, err, otherwise they will leave, and then we are in trouble.

He also thinks that the location of the school (the country where the school is located) is a significant factor for power relationships; he thinks that local, external, cultural schemas override the internal parameters, or even nature of the school. Finally, the Head at BISF made the association of parental power with their socio-cultural and economic backgrounds:

[Parents] tend to come from backgrounds where they are more confident, they’re listened to in other kinds of circumstances, so they’re not shy about coming forward. There is always the kind of economic bargain in the background because the overwhelming majority of international schools are private and fee-paying, and there can be a mentality that if you’re paying for something, you should be treated like a client, with, you know, customer service.

	FASS (USA)	BISF (France)
Commitment of students’ voice /vision	-Students’ voice is welcome and respected but time and place are structured. -Students’ voice is allowed within the context of the ‘ <i>respect</i>	-Leadership believes in students’ voice as it gives them ‘ <i>a sense of belonging and responsibility</i> ’, but the reality does not always follow. -Students should not have full

	<i>of teachers’</i> and hierarchy, and must not be critical of individuals in public.	decision-making power, yet need to be involved in some of the key decisions that are going to affect them, and should be provided with ‘ <i>genuine ways of informing decisions</i> ’.
Structures in place for students’ voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Culture of listening to students. -SC to organise events -Delegates represent students’ interests. -Delegates now meet with SSD individually prior to (not during) meetings where students are discussed. The change was controversial, and criticized by students. -Students can request a meeting with SSD anytime. -Advisory (for general learning and school matters) and Homeroom Periods (for more personal and daily matters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Culture of listening to students. -SC to organise events and represent students’ needs and wishes (but has limited power, from what the Head said) -Advisory (for general learning and school matters) and homeroom periods (for more personal and daily matters) -Scheduled meetings with the SC president to receive student feedback and innovative ideas -Surveys to ask students their points of view about the school environment, classes, etc. -Participation in strategic meetings
New structures that the Head and/or SSD would like implemented for students’ voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Changes were made recently. No further changes planned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A student on the Board -A forum that would enable harmonious cross-cultural conversations and debates. -Ideal model would be to hand back decision-making responsibility to people, be they colleagues or students.
Comments about parental power, communication and intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Culture of listening to parents “<i>Parental power has grown ‘exponentially’ over the last 10 years</i>”. -Parents should support their children’s education, yet not intervene in the school’s pedagogy. -Parents are perceived as Customers. -A Parent-Teacher Alliance exists to organise events and represent parents. -Parent delegates are met regularly to hear their perspective about school matters. -Communication to (and from) parents by email should be limited in length and not done at night time. -Parents are invited for more significant issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Culture of listening to parents. -Parents are perceived as being confident and expecting to be treated as customers. -A Parent-Teacher Alliance exists to organise events and represent parents. -The Board of Trustees is mostly made up of parents. The Board states the strategic direction of the school, chooses the Head of school, and sets a vision for the school.
Vision of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The SSD considers that the ‘position’ is what gives the legitimacy and authority to implement rules and pedagogy. She does not consider this as ‘power’ as such, and makes a distinction between having authority (and eventually implement power), and power – Her view of power is non-linear. -The SSD has a ‘flat’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is a hierarchy in terms of authority due to the position and the respect one has. -No authority without respect for one’s practice, even for the Head. -The SSD describes the levels of hierarchy (pyramidal model), starting with the body with the most power: Board/Head/coordinators/teachers/ students.

	pyramidal view of hierarchy, with the Head on top, SSD next but sharing responsibilities with IBco and students' supervisor ('mini-pyramids' of power within the larger one). -The SSD monitors the daily discipline, and is closely involved with students. -The Head has a pyramidal vision of power: Board/Head/Directors/Faculty/students. -Parents are "off to the side and occasionally become a factor".	-The SSD is involved with more serious disciplinarian matters. -However, the SSD feels that even the 'people at the top' have constraints: Budgetary, Board, IB, staff social and working atmosphere and collegiality, accreditation etc. -The international school is the 'life' of the community and this changes the nature of the relationships between stakeholders
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Table 5- Heads' and SSD's vision of student and parental voice and power

The SSD at FASS said that she has to contend with what she refers to as 'the emotional piece'. She believes that students' and parents' voice (and power) has increased considerably over the last ten years. Parents have become too emotional, too irrational, and have lost track of concrete and rational educational analyses of situations; and students have more knowledge from internet or other media, and like to be in control, and place themselves on the same level as the teachers.

According to the Heads and SSDs, the distribution of power is neither linear nor vertical. The financial situation of the school, the local context, the families' cultural and socio-economic profile, students' socio-emotional and developmental factors, contemporary factors and many other parameters all contribute to situations of power. Notwithstanding, schools follow an official and institutional structure, and develop and implement policies and procedures. These mechanisms of power, in both schools, are supported by a structured system of respective responsibilities and levels of authority, which I delineate here following Weber's notions of authority (1958):

1. Boards carry an authority which tends to be partly 'traditional' (for its traditional representative stance) and partly 'legal' (for its overall long-term financial responsibility);
2. Leaderships carry a legally recognized authority for the overall pedagogic and administrative responsibility. The authority of the staff may be occasionally questioned by students or parents, yet the single fact that it may be questioned seems to imply that there is an already existing authority to be questioned - or fought against.
3. Teachers have an authority that is both legal and charismatic;

4. The ‘Pastoral’ team (including among others, Year Group Leaders, the counsellor and the nurse) is the disciplinarian and emotional framework that provides support, guidance and regulating actions. It embodies all three kinds of authority - traditional, legal and charismatic.

5. The IBO is not ‘concretely present’ in each school, yet its authority is effective. The philosophy of the IB contributes to generating new ways of thinking and new ways of seeing the authority relationship between the faculty/staff and the students.

6. Students have rights, as highlighted earlier, even if these are seldom known, expressed, or requested. In some contexts, students might gain authority through particular transformative processes, such as Student Council members who hold a representative position and have legitimate authority to represent the needs of the body of students towards Leadership. On a different level, at school and at home, young people may claim legitimacy of ownership for their personal territories such as their bedrooms and spaces at school that ‘belong’ to them.

7. Lastly, parents’ presence in school might be limited but their authority is real on several accounts; first as potential Board members; second as ‘members/customers’; and third, parents hold parental authority and have legal and ethical legitimacy to protect and educate their children. For instance, the connections between parents and staff/faculty are generated from an understood and official partnership established when the parents entrust the school with their child’s education. In the parents-staff connection, authority is shared: The school has pedagogic and in *loco parentis* authority (and responsibility) and the parents have educational/parental authority. Power shifts from one direction to another depending on the context.

Legitimized by administrative and educational authority, school systems put in place administrative and discipline structures, which are reminiscent of Foucault’s ‘mechanisms of power’ and concept of ‘discipline’ (1975/1995). These are the rules, protocols and policies that ensure the learning, safety, well-being and discipline of the students, such as homework policies, academic honesty, child protection, and anti-bullying policies to name but a few. I list these mechanisms of power in Table 6.

	FASS (USA)	BISF (France)
Homework	-Homework system -Electronic system to post major assignments	-Homework policy exists but SSD is unsure as to whether students are aware of the existence of the policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students' responsibility to make a note of homework assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students' responsibility to make a note of homework assignments -Electronic system to post major assignments -Culture of negotiation and dialogue between teachers and students
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Internal Assessment processes -Electronic system: Grades are recorded and accessible to parents -Parents are informed by email if homework is not done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Internal Assessment processes - Electronic system: Grades are recorded and accessible to parents (as well as feedback) -Parents are informed by email if homework is not done
Pastoral matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Code of conduct (attendance, behaviour, academic honesty, etc.) -Parents are contacted in case of lateness and/or absence -Anti-bullying policy -Child Protection policy -Safety protocol (lock downs, fire drills, limited access to building, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Code of conduct (attendance, behaviour, academic honesty etc.) -Parents are contacted in case of lateness and/or absence -Anti-bullying policy -Child Protection policy -Field trip policy -Safety protocol (lock downs, fire drills, guards, limited access to building)
Working with parents/guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents are alerted by email if homework is not done. -SSD is copied on all emails to parents -Parents are invited in if homework is consistently not done, and future in school is not guaranteed -Parents are alerted if students arrive late, or miss classes, and students' future in the school is not guaranteed if absences continue, or students may be kept back one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students are reminded of doing their homework if it is not done. -Parents are alerted by email by teachers if homework is (still) not done. -Homeroom advisors are copied on all emails -Parents are encouraged to provide a space and time for homework, but are "<i>discouraged from doing too much to support their child</i>". --The school "<i>encourages independence of regulation, learning skills</i>"

Table 6 - Mechanisms of power

The last section '*Working with parents*' is an essential contribution to the schools' implementation of the mechanisms of power (homework, assessment and pastoral policies). Communication with parents (informing, alerting) is promoted in both schools. In case of students having to be called on for homework not done, for arriving late, or for other more serious disciplinary measures, schools appeal to the parents' full support, first by emails, then potentially through in-person meetings. However, as the SSD at FASS remarked, the closeness of the relationship between school and parents can create some vulnerability, and revisit the established order:

[this relationship between parents and School] can be a double-bind. It can be useful, or can produce the worst of situations. It is good to have privileged relationships with

parents, students... we can listen to them, we can reassure, we do this all the time, we encourage parents to talk to their child, when there is no dialogue, when parents do not listen to their child, we help restore the communication...but this can be risky, it can make the school [vulnerable].... There is a certain legitimacy, an established order...Students have their prerogatives, but I have mine, and this is sometimes compromised...

4.4 IB COORDINATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON IB INDEPENDENT LEARNING

My main inquiry as I interviewed the IB Diploma coordinators (IBcos) was to hear the IB coordinators' perspectives on the systems in place in each school (see Table 7), and to shed light on the concept of autonomy and independent learning inherent to the IB, as understood and actually practised in both schools. From hearing the students, I felt that there is a certain dissonance between the IB theory, how it is implemented in schools, and the students' experience and sense. I examine this in detail in Chapter Five. I therefore interviewed both IBcos to get some answers about the IB DP programme, taught in G11 and G12. The skills taught in G10 in both schools follow specific programmes that prepare them for the DP programme, in that students are continuously taught the learning skills needed to be successful in the DP. Throughout their IB years, including during their DP programme, students are prepared to become independent, principled and cooperative learners. Concretely, this might mean that DP teachers provide students with opportunities to organize their major tasks and internal assessments, to manage time, to choose titles of major assignments, or to manage deadlines.

Asked about how the school balances the teaching of independent learning skills with intense communication, the IBco at BISF precisely explained how

...these communications are basically about independent learning, and the fact that the students are given this block of time in order to organize their time in order to produce a piece of work, and ideally the communication system has checkpoints [...] for us to flag-up if we feel that the independent learning isn't taking place, and perhaps more guidance at this stage in their development is necessary.

The IBco at FASS emphasized the need to teach students how to reach out; as she says, "one of the biggest skills to teach kids is 'How do [I] ask for help? Because in life, you're going to ask for help in any given situation". The teaching of independent learning is a process, and many students struggle with the level of autonomy, getting the right balance between academics, social life, environment and potential stress levels. The FASS IBco explained that students often get confused about being independent,

“being autonomous for one’s own learning”, and not seeking assistance, which is, to her, the opposite of true independent learning. The IB Programme is a rigorous and substantial programme and the FASS IBco believes that the thought of just going out and handling everything on their own is not really realistic.

	FASS (USA) and BISF (France)
Components of the IB programmes that emphasise independent learning, and skills taught	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Development of creative and thinking skills; learning through inquiry -Three main elements: CAS (Creativity, Action and Service) ,TOK (Theory of Knowledge) and EE (Extended Essay)- Appendix F. - Learner Profile (Appendix E). -Written tasks: Internal Assessments (IA) for DP: Guides are provided, but independent research is needed. IA processes must be respected (yet there is flexibility). -Students need to space out their learning. -Balance between scaffolding, communication and independent learning. -Teaching: Communication skills, research skills, self-regulation skills, time management, mindfulness, collaborative and debating skills, teaching to recognize strengths and weaknesses, resilience.
Contact with parents vs autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parent-teacher conferences. -Regular communication. -Information sessions to teach parents to not get over-involved.

Table 7– Components and skills of the IB philosophy

How students experience their own reality of the ‘independent skills learning’, whether it be coming from the school’s implementation of the IB philosophy, from parents’ style of parenting, and/or individual narratives, is one of the students’ perceptions that I address in the next chapter, Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

STUDENTS' DATA: PERCEPTIONS OF POWER AND POWERLESSNESS, AND STORIES TO TELL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four addressed the school context of power relations from the staff members' perspectives. Their views were grounded partly in the curriculum reality of each school, partly in the individual members' philosophical and pedagogical views, and partly in their own narratives. This chapter, Chapter Five, and the following, Chapter Six, deal with the students' views about the context and perceptions of these power relations as well as the way they respond to these power relations, reflecting on students' agency, suggesting changes they believe would serve the student population better.

During the interviews, students were asked whether they would be able to identify power differentials and power hierarchies at school, or if they had any sense of 'what' could give power, and in what context power was felt. When they reported back on their perceptions of power, students mentioned a whole spectrum of experiences ranging from the most mundane experience (such as having to do homework, and to do it on time) to being convoked by the SSD for disciplinary matters, or being reprimanded or queried about smoking off campus.

The reasons given by students for choosing to participate in the study followed two main patterns, one each for BISF and for FASS. BISF students more frequently cited their interest in power relationships that are distributed across parents, teachers and themselves; some had had issues in relation to these power relations, whether it involved their parents or their teachers. FASS students appeared to be more interested in power exercised over students by Leadership, and what they could do about it. This might well be due to the size of each secondary school section (BISF's is larger than FASS's), and the involvement of each director with disciplinary matters. At FASS, the SSD is much more involved with discipline. It is feasible that this set of students were more attuned to power matters, and more critical than non-participants.

The data from the interviews was rich. Students were able to reflect thoughtfully on processes of power relations, and demonstrated creative and critical thinking skills,

possibly reflecting another IB LP attribute, ‘*Thinkers*’ (Appendix E). Students’ stories highlighted that power was perceived by students mostly, yet not exclusively, when they were the ‘*recipient*’ of an exercise of power. They were able to communicate their experiences, feelings and thoughts either in their native language or not. Three students out of eighteen spoke English as a native language, although ten chose to do the interview in English, and the rest in French. Besides any cultural meaning this ratio might imply in terms of power relations (I return to this point later), and besides any potential difficulty one may have during such an exercise, it also means that their oral expression was at times somewhat clumsy. I respected this, and kept the transcription and/or translation as close as possible to their expressions.

The next three sections present the findings and analyse how the characteristics inherent to the IB programme, the ISc nature and context, and the schools’ mechanisms of power impact the sense that students have of power in their school and shape their experience of everyday school life.

5.2 INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMME

As mentioned earlier, FASS and BISF teachers encourage students to be in control of their own studying behaviours, and as such, to have responsibility for both their study habits and their performance. However, the students’ perception of the way they are being evaluated, or appreciated, may be sometimes biased and coloured by feelings of subjectivity, such as favouritism and privilege. There are two main kinds of evaluations and/or assessments happening in a school: peer evaluations (between students, and between staff members), and ‘hierarchical’ assessments (students assessed by staff). Whilst peer appraisals are not the subject of this paper, the power differential between administrative leaders and the teaching staff is real and has indirect consequences on the way teachers relate to students, and on the way they express their assertiveness and authority. I develop this point in Chapter Six, when I discuss the concept of ‘power by proxy’.

I specifically shed light in this section on homework assessments and the electronic recording system of posting grades. Some students view this as a sign of lack of trust on the school’s part when staff makes it possible for parents to access their children’s grades. They perceive this practice as being intrusive, and some students feel they have little control over that process (besides actually controlling their grades). In both

schools, homework monitoring is similar: assessments are posted electronically, and students are required to keep an agenda. Sometimes parents are not familiar with such an electronic system. Iris, for instance, said that her parents “[don’t] really understand [the system]. They have difficulty understanding how it functions, but they try to”. Parents are encouraged to use the system and are supported by the school in doing so. The schools’ goal of increasing academic transparency and communication with parents results in various reactions from students, from disempowerment to acceptance. As Iris commented, “it should up to me to tell my parents when and what I want to share with them”. Iris believes she is autonomous in her work. She feels that she does not need to have the school impose rules of autonomy and control on her. She added that BISF pushes students to be autonomous if they have not already begun to acquire those skills, which sounds somewhat paradoxical in that she feels that the school can be at times over-interventionist.

The IB programme teaches students independent study skills. However, whilst students are taught to become more independent in their work, they are *also* monitored closely by both the faculty and parents. Parents like to support their children to develop as independent learners and human beings. Yet, most of the time, they monitor their children’s homework, overview their children’s assessments, and remain in close contact with teachers whenever their language enables them to do so and support them in their student-led activities. The data seems to indicate that students yearn to be independent and that homework becomes for them the predominant narrative for independent learning.

Often, the ‘monitoring’ is accompanied by increased communication between school staff and parents, a process which is perceived in various ways by students. For Frances, the school-parent communication is not necessarily perceived as negative or oppressive. Older students, Frances said, have “a lot more autonomy. [Teachers] are not here to hold your hand to tell you what to do, how to do it... They say ‘I ask you that question, you have 10 minutes to answer’, etc.” Students, she added, are prepared “for [university] because our parents won’t be there with us”. Originally from the UK, Frances finds the system in her new school much stricter than in the UK: “There is more of a ‘don’t care’ attitude in the UK. Here a lot of people want to do well, and therefore do their homework, because it benefits them [...] it’s more disciplined here. We have deadlines, teachers send emails”. Frances supports the school’s discipline for homework and the philosophy of promoting independent study skills: “I am a

person...that has to be told you have to do something, and when to do it, whereas when I came here, I [...] realized that I need to do it myself. I did become more independent, definitely”. Frances would prefer her mother to not get involved: “It’s a bit annoying sometimes ...it’s a bit of pressure on me and I would prefer to do the work by myself”. Paradoxically, she appreciates some level of pressure “otherwise I might not do all my homework”. So, it seems as if Frances appreciates being independent, being left alone by her mother, and being structured at the same time.

Henriet shared some of those views. She believed that students should be left alone by parents, and through the teaching of the IB, learn to be prepared for University.

However, she conceded that parents’ responsibility is to help their children “with the organisation [...] set(ing) them up to be more independent in the future, so just giving them that base of organisational skills of time management is good”.

Both schools have homework protocols, designed to help the students manage their time, although students are not always aware of it. Parents are sent the policies in order to be informed and to monitor their children’s work. If students do not comply with their homework requirements and tasks, students are talked to, may be reminded verbally, or might be kept behind to complete their work; parents might be contacted by email for first or repeated offense depending on the seriousness of the task, and students might receive a penalty grade if homework is still not done after warning and emails. Yet, whilst students feel at times ‘over-controlled’, they also appreciate and/or are open to the structure.

Valeria knew the constraints and the limitations of the homework policies, and accepted them: “I personally do not mind constraints. If I did not have a structure to go, like if it was my week-ends [...] I would be lying in bed ...watching stuff on YouTube, which is not very productive”. Nevertheless, if the schools have homework policies and Internal Assessment protocols that students need to abide by, students are left to work within a fairly flexible system and are taught independent study skills. Thus, they have to find the right balance, respecting policies and becoming independent learners, whether they condone it, or not, or struggle through it. Valeria appears to be supportive of the method, yet it is unclear as to whether ‘independence’ is for her a consequential and unwanted means to be successful, or an appreciated goal to achieve:

The IB brings you independence. The teachers are there to a certain degree [...] for the Internal Assessment. No math teacher can help you. Under any circumstance. You have to, like, check yourself, if it’s correct. You can check with other students, but no teachers. So, you need to get independence to strive forward.

In some respect, one hears the same hesitation in Dreide's statement: "[Complying with my tasks] is something that I want to do, and must do". She adds that the "IB develops our brain, and a lot of universities are looking for students with this [study] mentality". For Chloé, autonomy and independence are natural skills to develop at this age, regardless of the type of school students are in. She said those skills are also developed in the French section of her international school; at the same time, students have consequences if work is not done: bad grades, reprimands in class, emails to parents, meetings with parents.

Agnes articulates well the ambivalence (and perhaps apparent contradiction) between 'autonomy', close monitoring, and consequences:

We do a lot of independent work. We do our own labs. I feel teachers favour independence. We get mini-researches to do, on our own, and we don't get guidelines. I mean we get a question to answer, but we don't have bullet points to follow. That's independence, in a way. [But] if you don't submit it, and there is a second deadline, you would get a 1 or a zero [out of 7 or 8, *my addition*].

Yasmina also seems to find the situation between monitoring and independent skills somewhat confusing. When Yasmina was asked if and how teachers guided her in her work, she said

[teachers] don't tell you 'you need to do your [assessment]'...They advise you, send you an email, it's kind of like you need to do your own research for everything...They don't make you study math, but you know if you don't study this thing, it will come up in the test...It's as if there is not much guidance given...[...] They want you to be free, however...

She was not too sure how to interpret the situation, and did not finish the sentence.

Learning to be independent is a process for students, and they seem to deliberately choose their learning strategies. Matthieu mentioned, for example that, at that moment in time, they had a playscript to learn, and he articulated well the pedagogy of independent learning:

We have a play in three weeks, and no one knows the text. We were supposed to have learnt it for last Tuesday, and no one has. The teacher says nothing. [...] We don't have a punishment, so all good, but at the same time, it's on us, and we should have learnt it. We don't do the work, there are no consequences... but it will be in three weeks' time that we have the consequences. There are automatic consequences.

Matthieu believes that the sole consequence is facing the truth of not knowing the play, which would cause humiliation of not knowing the play, as well as the self-realization that he failed himself. Part of it, though, might be that Matthieu had no fear of punishment, and therefore became lenient about learning the play. Notwithstanding, it might be that by acting so, he went through a process of independent learning. As for Fanny, she contradicts the view that ‘independent learning’ goes with a reduction of teachers’ control. She believes instead that the “more control the teachers have, the more independent students have to be [...] If teachers are very rigid in their deadlines, students have to have discipline to get things done on time”. She adds that having “extra tutoring sessions outside of class with the teacher... That can take away from their independence”. Therefore, she equates ‘independent’ learning with a student’s implicit decision to conform and comply with rules and discipline themselves; and she equates ‘dependent’ learning with the necessity to receive additional formative and/or disciplinarian control.

Léo has an interesting rapport with authority, based on past experiences with authoritative figures: It seems as if he depersonalizes the act of authority and disempowers the person in order to solely keep what is meaningful to him - that is, the consequence itself:

the fact that a teacher can tell me something, it does not change my life. [...] if I do not hand in a piece of homework, it’s the bad grade that will stay [as well as] the communication with my parents, the sanctions, being allowed to go out at lunch time or not. Not what the teacher says...

Students’ rapport with independent learning therefore may be linked with their rapport with authoritative figures (teachers and parents), yet also possibly with their trust in the process (of learning to become an independent learner). Part of that process is how much they embrace the type of education they follow, that is, to what extent they understand, ‘critique’, and take advantage of the ‘international school’ educational system they belong to (yet have not necessarily chosen).

5.3 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL NATURE AND CONTEXT

The ‘international school’ context is, at its essence, what defines an international school. The geographical and academic contexts of both schools, FASS and BISF, are slightly different, yet when students were asked in what way they felt that an *international*

school would change or create power dynamics (PD) in a school, five major common domains emerged in the discourse of students from both schools:

- The (perceived) business nature of the schools;
- parental involvement;
- the multicultural environment and context;
- communication between all members of the community; and the
- boundaries crossed due to the closeness and/or overlapping of the different sub-systems.

This is not to say that students had a comprehensive and accurate understanding of what an ISc may be, with all its components and complexities. Yet it shows a genuine reflection of their current (and perhaps past) experiences of an ISc. The particularity of the ISc students' responses to power appeared to be generated by the unique dynamics occurring between these five domains, rather than by the actual discrete characteristics of each mechanism.

5.3.1 The (Perceived) Business Nature Of The Schools

An oft-mentioned aspect of perceived power dynamics in an international school lies in the specificities of the private nature of the school. One example of this is the relationship between the school and the parents which is coloured by the schools' private status. Even though both BISF and FASS are non-profit organizations, several students (and their parents, according to them) perceive this differently, and feel they are the clients and customers of a business, with a sense that the real purpose is to make money, as well as to educate. This occasionally introduces a doubt and distrust in the relationship between the school and the families even if this student and parental perception might not be presented (or recognized) as such by the schools themselves, especially at BISF. Iris is very clear about this:

This school is an enterprise. It belongs to someone to whom we give money, and it makes the whole system work. After...more money is made, and the schools gets improved... [the school's communication] is like a business, it's publicity, understanding that everything they send, it's to make money...

Parents pay a high fee for their children to attend each of these schools. Even in cases where the parents' employers pay the fee, there is still an underlying feeling from all parents that the school needs to perform, as well as the expectation that the school must serve the well-being and academic needs of their children. Chloé illustrates this with

her own words: “Parents give [the school] money, so they have a lot of power [...] and even power over the teachers’ wages. Yes, money gives a lot of power”. Henriët’s statement confirms this view:

...Parents have power over the school, saying like ‘we pay that much money, we should be able to have this and that... we are funding the child’s education... [we have] the right to say ‘we want this for our child’...

Ju-lieta pushes the argument further: “Parents can threaten teachers and Leadership. They can take them to court... [...] there is a recent story at school...parents got involved, and ‘silenced’ the school”. Fanny further underlines the strength of parental power (expressed as ‘student customer’), and how it might, in her perspective, affect the teaching:

I guess, at the school, the student is the customer, and the teachers are aware of that. If students are unhappy, the parents are unhappy, and then they’ll complain, and the teacher will have to change. Because it’s a business, and the student is the customer, they are more [at] an elevated level compared to teachers at the school.

Valeria also mentions money as a reason for her parents to be involved, although this is not the only reason. She believes that a fee-paying school makes the school accountable for the students’ well-being; and

...parents should be allowed to get involved into school matters, for several reasons. It’s their kids being in school, they have to worry about their well-being. Parents pay the school [...] parents expect a certain level of education in return for that amount... [...] parents do have a say in school.

Whilst the Boards keep an overall hold on the financial health of the schools, the schools’ leaderships have the decision-making power for all educational decisions, including the well-being of the students. Thus, they have the authority to decide to keep or to expel a student; *de facto*, the school has an impact on the student’s school career. So, whilst parents potentially have leverage over the schools due to being ‘customers’, the schools do possess prerogatives of their own in terms of power. Of course, that power also arises in part from balancing the demands of the parents.

Léo has an interesting perspective about the school’s latent power of decision-making. He believes that the school, which he himself views as a business, has more interest in keeping a student than expelling him or her, because the student is a customer and a source of revenue. His opinion is based on an incident which took place the year before

when he was convoked by the SSD for a disciplinary talk. Léo felt vulnerable to being expelled. However, his feeling of vulnerability was not based on his behaviour, but on his position as the child of a teacher. Counter-intuitively, he did not conceive of this as being an advantage, as his mother is not paying for his education: To him, a non-paying student would be less likely to be kept than a fee-paying student, “they would hesitate less to expel a student who does not pay”. In this specific case, the student’s personal and emotional story has an impact on the way he perceives power dynamics. This case remains anecdotal, yet it illustrates how whether a family pays for their child’s education or not, the ‘business factor’ has an impact in that there is that underlying understanding that ‘money is power’.

5.3.2 *Parental Involvement*

A few students associated ‘paying for school’ with parental power, and parental power with parental involvement. Of course, the business element of the schools is not the unique vector leading to PI. In my initial FASS study (Leclerc, 2015), I highlighted that in an international school, for parents, “individual cultural adaptive strategies, different cultural schemas and new personal and professional demands combine to create a unique pattern of involvement needs, both at the school and at the family levels” (p.47). This applied mainly but not solely, to expatriate populations with one working spouse. It also applied, for instance, to bi-cultural families, expatriate families with both parents working, or career-oriented families.

Parental involvement with expatriate parents - in which one spouse has left a professional career behind - often involves finding new meaning in their new lives:

Being very involved with the child’s education and school life is a way to find meaning and adjust to the loss of their past professional roles. For a professional having to give up a successful career to follow the working spouse, this ‘new project’ becomes essential (Leclerc, 2015, p. 43).

Henriet, whose mother is a member of the PTA, described very well this parental search for meaning through being involved at school. She was reporting her mother’s opinion, yet she made the reasoning her own:

My mom told me once, she was at a coffee morning thing and she found that with the mothers, they were very determined, organizing things, proms, and all that, and that she thought it was that ... because a lot of these mothers they would be working in big, in professional jobs, but because they are living because of their husband’s job, they

cannot work, they bring in their skills organizing things for the school, and they kind of use their skills if they can't work.

Henriet mentioned another explanation for parental involvement; her statement was a generic one, not solely about herself. She established a link between parents' careers, and PI:

[Parents are] very involved because of universities... wanting more [...] success for their children to go to prestigious universities and do well at school. So, they are more involved...Because it is an international school, parents are usually here for career reasons, so I think that plays into how involved they are with their child's school.

She added that as parents come from business and international careers, they put more pressure on their children: "It's more like parents are pushing and pressuring their child to get into good universities, to have good transcripts grades. There is a lot more pressure there than in other places maybe".

Dreide's university career and her future are further reasons for her parents to exert a lot of pressure on her. Crying, Dreide explained how her parents chose her classes for her, saying that her own preferences served no purpose for later in life. They both reminded her of their own academic and career successes. So, whilst they did not exert any direct pressure on her for homework, she still felt the strain:

One has to be a good student to be here, and there is a lot of pressure for our future, so that we all become a CEO, etc., a successful adult, because we have had an education that cost a lot of money.

5.3.3 The multicultural environment and context

Parents of students attending ISCs are, however, not always hypervigilant and over-focused on their child's career. Sometimes parents are left 'in the dark', and there are many reasons for this to occur. Families may be new to school, new to the new school culture and may not have integrated all the 'codes' to access information. Families may be new to the international school culture; or perhaps they do not have the English language competencies for understanding emails and other types of communication with school staff; lastly, because they are deliberately leaving themselves 'in the dark'. Ju-lieta's parents, for instance, do not speak any English, and she said that they cannot help her with school's emails. Whilst she doesn't like her parents to ask questions about school, she adds, smiling, that it would be "better for them to be involved...[for me] to do my homework, it would be better". Besides language barriers, it is not

unusual for expatriate or foreign workers on local contracts to work long hours and to come home late. This is the case for both of Yasmina's parents. She wishes her parents "were more involved. They are not involved. My Dad [...] is very busy, my mother less ... They could be zero involved if I let them, but when I feel like they should be, I communicate to them". That underlines how the student compensates and reclaims control for a decrease in her parents' involvement. Yet, in a different situation (see the 'communication' section, 5.3.4), Yasmina was critical of the school's miscommunication, which led to her parents, this time, being 'over-involved'. Joanna had conflicting views about her own parents' involvement: "[My mother] doesn't really know much (of what happens at school)...and I would like her to know my grades more, but I know she has a job, etc. so I do not get mad at her. I like being independent".

What appears to be common to many of these testimonies (Ju-lieta's, Yasmina's, Joanna's, Frances's, Chloé's) is the ambivalence about their parents' participation. They were critical, yet non-judgmental, and supportive of their parents' involvement; they understood their parents' limitations, and yet they were appreciative of their own independence. Many times, the communication between all school members is at the heart of the quality and quantity of parental involvement, and the schools have a major role to play to ensure a healthy level of communication; as seen above, the cultural factor is not a negligible element in ensuring a healthy functioning of the parent-school communication. The cultural context, perhaps more than other contexts, is pervasive. Students demonstrated cultural awareness and sensitivity, and also acknowledged the existence of (few) conflictive situations generating from intercultural biases.

Valeria believed that students can be pressured by their 'cultural stories': "...Parents have such power on certain people's lives, my parents are quite free, but for example for Asian students, parents are quite dictating and restrictive about what their children do", a view that Fanny shared: "(In) my old school, one third of students were Asian...[...] we definitely noticed that parents had definitely a lot of control". Two students (one American, one Venezuelan) had similar cultural perceptions about Asian families, and on how it may, *in their view*, impact the students. Ju-lieta, of Asian origin (Singapore), did not report any parental pressure - quite the contrary, as mentioned above. Yet, she mentioned another cultural element that impacted her relating to teachers. She said that she never approached teachers in her past school (a French state school) to ask them for guidance, as she was too intimidated to do so; moreover, she said that it is not

customary to approach teachers in the French system. Ju-lieta generalized her attitude to BISF, “I don’t really want to disturb them, [...] in a class where I participate and feel closer to the teacher, it would be easier, but in a class where I don’t participate, I really couldn’t approach the teacher”. Ju-lieta mentioned that her mother would never meet up with her teachers “for her, it’s cultural... and the teachers represent authority”, referring to her being Singaporean. To Ju-lieta and her parents, the power distance is too large to allow a comfortable relationship – and communication - with teachers. Indeed, this is representative of a large PD, coherent with Hofstede, G. *et al.*’s cultural dimensions (2010) for Singaporean, and French cultures for Ju-lieta (Appendix B). Léo suggests another illustration of the large PD in the French culture. He says FASS students have a fewer opportunities to express their opinion than in French schools. In French schools, students can go on strike; at FASS, students do not strike. Asked why this is the case, Léo offers some suggestions; he believes that the relatively close relationship between teachers and students - “I am not going to set fire to bins in front of cool and kind teachers”-, and the presence of the guards may deter students from going on strike and/or protesting outside school. Léo, who comes from a French system, is more likely to authorize himself to express his opinion ‘*as a group*’ (versus administration, or versus the government); paradoxically, whilst a narrow PD usually leads to a disinhibited communication with teachers, Léo feels more restrained and inhibited to complain or resist when the power distance between students and staff is smaller. In a sense, in his case, familiarity mitigates the expression of power, although this is not the case for other students.

Yasmina mentioned a couple of culture-related anecdotes. The Student Council decided to present a case for determining a smoking corner either on the school campus, or near. The administration was against the idea, but students insisted. In order to add more weight to their request, they appealed to the ‘French culture’ argument, as in France students are allowed to smoke outside their schools. Yasmina said “the school does not want to condone smoking...[...] why would they? But then it’s also... I mean, I feel like France is the place where people smoke”, meaning that French schools allowed smoking - outside the campus.

Yasmina stated “it was quite controversial...[we] restricted a time and space...because the younger grades go to the park”. The constraint in the case of BISF is that the street is considered as “campus”, and students (even older students) are not allowed to smoke. Léo qualified this constraining rule as “immature”. Eventually, a smoking corner was

granted in a street nearby, close enough for the school to grant the authorization, even though it is not school territory. A multicultural school population is thus the cradle of a wide spectrum of cultural stories which can generate a diversity of responses to authority, which may display creativity and initiative.

International-mindedness, for all its value-laden educational and humanistic qualities, can indeed provoke some situations that are sources of conflict, such as involving race relations and geopolitical comments, and can exacerbate emotions. Yasmina, for example, stated that

coming from an [Islamic] background [...]...with all these political, cultural, intercultural conflicts happening in the world, I have had jokes coming at me. It's an international school, and it starts off as joking...it's all emotional...some days I feel like laughing, but other days, it really hurts me.

Subsequently, her mother intervened, to no avail; she then approached Leadership herself, in her position of SC member, and “the Director created something like called ‘international mindedness’”. Yasmina from a position of powerlessness re-empowered herself: “I felt powerless, but [my position] gave me the power to make a change”.

Frances, on the other hand, mentioned that a couple of students wanted to present a culturally-sensitive documentary to the whole of Grade 11. This divided the class, and the presentation was cancelled by the school leadership after a student and parents complained. Frances said that in such an environment, “people take in things, offense, or take things the wrong way”. Valeria added “you have to be open-minded to other peoples, but [...] you can't expect people to accept everything we bring with us. We also have to see the other side”, and as Silvia confirmed “the limitations we have is that you have to consider a lot of different cultures and communities”.

The intercultural context is not always experienced as a source of pain. Maria appreciates the cultural diversity, and thinks that the ‘melting pot’ reduces conflicts and makes people feel comfortable “...because it's international, students are more comfortable with each other [...] here, everyone gets along, because everyone is different even if it is cliché, it is true”. Henriët believes that teachers know about and respect different cultures, and try to relate differently to students. Their cultural knowledge gives them more power, says Agnès, and reciprocally, “the students respect them, and respect is a sort of power, as students will listen to them, because students know that teachers care about what they think”.

So far, I have shown that students are sensitive to power dynamics related to different aspects of international schools. For instance, they have strong opinions about what a private school might mean in terms of business and ‘money power’; they are ‘creatively’ critical of their parents’ involvement; and they are very much aware of cultural and intercultural factors and of the dynamics they might generate. Students are furthermore sensitive to the way school staff (teachers and administrative staff) communicate with themselves and with their parents.

5.3.4 *School Communication*

As we learned from the students, the schools’ methods of communication are at times misunderstood by the students, perceived as intrusive, and exacerbating power dynamics. As shown in Chapter Four the administrative and the pedagogical teams of an international school work hard at communicating with parents. The schools are accountable to the Board of Trustees (composed mostly of parents) and to all parents, as members of the association (BISF) and/or customers of the corporation (FASS). Other factors lead to an emphasis on communication: ‘Communication’ is viewed as an attribute in the IB programme (Appendix E); there is an emphasis on language in an international school; and due to a quick turnover of families, it is therefore desirable and necessary for new families to be informed properly and regularly. The confluence of all these reasons increases the need for schools to work on communication, and subsequently can exacerbate sensitivities and impact relationships of power. The culture of communication and the search for better communication are sometimes felt as going beyond ‘normal’ expectations of information. The focus on communication between the parents and the school staff tends to translate into a large amount of emails and phone calls between parents and the school, sometimes late into the evening and at week-ends. There are more meetings, both structured and *ad hoc*, as and when necessary (or felt as being necessary). And finally, parents get more involved in the functioning of the school, through PTA, organisation of events and so forth. Pragmatically, the electronic communication may develop into an excess of communication, ending in an opposite effect with both parents and students feeling either that their privacy has been intruded upon, or even losing interest in the message. Iris was critical of the communication at school: “The communication here is very bad, especially with parents. There is (too) much communication that at the end there is none. They say a lot, and it’s a lot of nothing!” As Yasmina stated: “I think there is too

much communication between the school and the parents... [It] does not highlight what's important, exams, field trips..."

Léo also thought that there is too much communication, almost finding a justification for parents to not read the letter: "[Parents] are informed about things that do not concern their child, and therefore a lot of parents have no interest in the newsletter".

Communication is multidirectional across the three sub-systems of the school (school with parents, school with students, parents with students) and power and emotions are often the driving force behind the communication. In an international school, relationships between families and staff can get very close, due to the school often being the sole support system of many families.

Another example of power dynamics through the means of communication occurs for example when a family of expatriates has just arrived at school and feels that their child is not receiving all the information they deem necessary. The parent (often but not exclusively the non-working spouse) might repeatedly contact school staff to obtain a shift or a change in the system and in the way things work. Maria, new to school, reported that her mother intended to connect with teachers over a sports club issue, and her mother needed to insist several times in order to eventually succeed: "Even though she got annoyed, she kept going until she got an answer". This is often rooted in the parents' own anxiety due to the move, with a child leaving his familiar school, going to a new school system and to a new country.

Yasmina did not question her parents being involved in her education: She recognized, like her parents, the importance of the IB. She thought that the school is right in emailing parents, yet she revisited the format of the communication, and felt that an 'email protocol' would be useful in allowing a more consistent and less anxiety-producing school-home communication. In that sense, she highlighted an issue that has also been perceived and expressed by other students.

In addition to what is at times considered as an excessive *quantity* of communication, the *quality* of communication is also mentioned as lacking cultural subtlety and discernment, sometimes sending a message of school omnipotence or cultural insensitivity.

At FASS, most (not all) communication is bilingual French-English (newsletters, website communication, reports). English being the teaching language at BISF, all communication to parents is done in English. The quasi-exclusiveness of the English language can also create difficult situations where families do not always understand the

schools' informative communications. Students, at times, need to explain the communication to their parents, and power relations can thus shift. Ju-lieta mentioned the odd times when her "mother is always going to ask her brother to translate messages (about her), even if [she is] in the room ... [...] and ask [her] to translate messages" (about him), the reason given being the different strengths in languages that they both have. Communication in an international school is impacted by many socio-cultural, business, linguistic and educational factors, and produces complex and ambiguous power dynamics which are unique to each family situation. Now and then, the exercise of power, thus, occurs in a 'grey zone', involving the complexity of both the family and the school dynamics. Ethical boundaries are not necessarily or unequivocally crossed, yet both parties (for example, parents and staff) work together, sometimes strategically 'jousting', to get to a desired outcome. This is when emotional and psychological factors, and 'dis-communication', intertwine and generate power dynamics across the three sub-systems. Maria, for instance, said that she needs to rely on her Mom to get school information. "Most of the time, the students are not aware of what is happening. Often Mom has to tell me there is going to be that college visit... Like I would not know if she did not tell me". Whereas Maria was critical of the (ineffective) overload of communication coming from school, she readily admits that, whilst many students do check most of their emails, many others do not (like herself). Maria suggested that direct communication to students would be more efficient such as via an on-screen message, as in her past school. Maria chooses to not become informed, disempowering herself and potentially rationalizing in judging the current system.

Yasmina talked about an incident in which the school contacted her parents because she had not completed the draft of an important piece of work. Her parents received a formal email the evening it was due; the email was perceived by them out of context and as their daughter was asleep, Yasmina said that they panicked and ruminated over this all night, yet blames the school. Her parents woke her up in the morning with comments about the work not done:

They told me I had to do it straight away... *'You have to do this now! Do you want me to come to school and talk to [your] teachers?'* I said: *'Relax, I know what this is about. I'll talk to the IB coordinator'*. Sometimes, the school makes things bigger than they are...

Communication, as seen above, is nurtured across the different sub-systems. It becomes either a support system or a tool which carries much weight in terms of image,

accountability, and expectations both for the school and for the parents. As I have remarked earlier, the role of an ISc as a support system is especially essential for expatriate families – and for staff not coming from the host country (Leclerc, 2015). Families (students and parents) and staff may get to know each other fairly well, developing cordial, informal if not familiar relationships. This is reinforced by the relatively small size of both FASS and BISF. Moreover, the IBO programmes emphasize a close educational relationship between teachers and students. The closeness between students and staff (and parents) may lead to ambiguous situations, and provide fertile terrain for boundary-crossing.

5.3.5 *Boundary-crossing*

The boundary-crossing that students mentioned usually, yet not exclusively, occur in two situations. First, it occurs when a teacher or administrator goes beyond what students would expect of their field of authority, or their prerogatives; second, it happens when students feel that the school intrudes into their personal and private lives. The latter can happen both at school and at home. Sometimes, both overlap. Sometimes the boundary-crossing appears to be perceived by students as an abuse of power, and sometimes not.

An example of the boundary-crossing of the first kind is given by Célia. She remarked that some teachers occasionally make jokes with students; yet she intuitively knew that she may not reciprocally respond to her teacher's sense of humour:

Because the school is so small, there are some teachers who make jokes with students. This is unfair. They can joke with us, and this does not bother me, but simply I cannot do it back. [...] For example, there is a teacher who makes some marks on our cheeks for fun, with his pen...he would stop if we asked him to stop, but we just can't stand up and do the same to him...

Célia did not see this as an abuse of power; she said that if she wanted she could ask the teacher to stop. However, something inhibited the students from asking the teacher to stop. One of Célia's interpretations was that the teacher tried to be '*funny*'. However, the 'invisibility of power' may play an important inhibiting role in this case. Teachers' power is not articulated verbally, yet is displayed in the implicit understanding of vertical power (power distance, traditional authority, etc.). Implicit understanding of vertical/hierarchical power, in this case, leads to submissive behaviour. This was very well expressed by Maria when she was asked if she was aware of power:

I don't really see (the power) like this, when I am in school. I don't observe the power, it's not obvious, maybe because we are always changing building, interacting, between the teachers and like, the other staff members... I don't see it but I know it's there if you know what I mean.

Another example of boundary-crossing of a similar kind was reported by Chloé. She felt that a member of staff once crossed some boundaries, or at least went beyond her professional role. She was convoked once by the SSD with a classmate; they both believed they got lectured on the values of life, on how to behave as a future adult, and so forth. The SSD judged her authority was legitimate enough to judge the students' behaviour as being 'not good enough for life' and gave herself the right to lecture students on how they should behave in adulthood. The students did not appreciate and considered what they heard to be a moralistic reprimand.

Chloé felt that the reprimand extended beyond school life: "She was not talking about our school life, but our life in general, our adult life". Did the director go beyond what is strictly her role? The students tended to think so, even if they understood that the SSD's position gave her the permission to do so. Chloé said that the SSD's intervention had infringed upon her parents' role. So, what made the director potentially go beyond her role? Her own understanding of an educator's role? Or, as Chloé thought, the SSD's personality... "This came from her character, I do not think it came from the system".

The SSD appealed to her values and principles to lecture Chloé and Célia, and they reacted against the principle, "we found that their discourse and the authority they imposed on us ... was tyrannical". The SSD's personality fed into the overall exercise of power, even if the students intuitively felt that the power dynamics extended beyond the mere school system of discipline. It is, in effect, questionable to imagine that she deliberately *used* her personality to impose her views. Her personality is only one determinant of the expression of her discourse.

The second kind of boundary-crossing involves the limits between home and school, and homework is a typical domain where those limits are porous. This is the case in IB schools where 'working independently' - which is part of the '*Risk-taking*' and '*Inquirers*' LP attributes (IBO, 2013) - may legitimize, for the students, a system where parents should not get involved, and would justify a claim for independence.

However, a teacher giving a piece of homework and expecting it to be handed in is a customary event, which is usually accepted by teachers, students and parents alike. It

was not usually perceived by students as a deliberate abuse of power or a deliberate act to annoy them. Giving and receiving homework was perceived as normality and not often questioned by students. To be more precise, the concept of homework was not usually criticized, but the process was.

Sara asserted “teachers need to realize that students have a life outside school. We have a private life, and it’s not obvious that they take it into account”. Sara puts her personal life first. On the contrary, when Joanna’s mother suggested she go out with her, Joanna responded “no, Mom, we have homework”. She was very clear in her feelings about homework ‘intrusion’ into home life and felt it constrains her personal and family life:

[The school] has policies, but I also think that they have big power in controlling our time in giving homework, even though we are not in school. Homework is a kind of way to control our time. In school, they control through attendance, and schedules. But also homework is a way to control our time even though we are not in school.

However, whereas she finds that homework can at times be intrusive, Joanna still believes in the necessity and value of homework, especially for practising Math. For Yasmina, it is similar. She was critical of the lack of balance in homework distribution: “You get no homework, or so much at the same time”. Like Joanna, she added that when family members “want to go on a trip for the long week-end...you just can’t [...] because of so much homework”. Is it intentional that teachers intrude into home life?

Is it a sign that teachers are not quite aware of the impact of homework on students’ time and home life, or is it teachers’ poor organisational skills, as Dreide mentions? Yasmina was hesitant and then suggested that it might be intentional for the school to get into the home life. It was hard to judge whether it was Yasmina’s interpretative ways of appreciating the school’s promotion of independent learning, or ways of denouncing the school’s potential intrusive methods. So, whilst the schools seek to implement efficient homework policies, the students’ perception is that their personal needs are not necessarily being respected due to school prerogatives.

An example of boundary-crossing that overlaps both types was mentioned, again by Chloé, who seemed sensitive to those kinds of issues; she remembered a time when a student was smoking outside school during lunch hour. Despite the fact that students are allowed to leave campus, a teacher who happened to be out in the neighbourhood spotted the student smoking in the street and made a negative comment, “[the teacher] had not disciplined the student, but she did make a comment, and exercised her school

supervisor's authority". It is to be noted here that there are no visible ways of recognizing the belonging of the students to a particular school, as they do not wear uniforms (besides potential identification due to the use of the French language in the USA and the English language in France). The exercise of power could therefore be understood as the expression of a personal narrative. It is possible too that the family-feeling between staff and students at FASS paradoxically weakens the boundaries and empowers staff with "parental duties". Chloé felt indeed that this exercise of power crossed ethical boundaries, and demonstrated that, in fact, "[students] are not free" even during what they understand to be free time. The act of authority might instil then in the student a feeling of being 'under' somebody's power, regardless of where he/she is, and therefore maintaining a power differential both on campus and close to (yet off) campus. In this particular case, the act of authority was out of (geographical) bounds and exerted outside the 'regular' institution's protocols.

5.4 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS OF POWER

Schools develop procedures and policies to ensure students are educated according to the schools' philosophy and mission, and to ensure students' well-being (safety, child protection, emotional development and support, discipline, learning growth). Rules not only give rise to exercises of power, they also generate personal reactions amongst the people who implement them (mostly staff), and the people who need to follow them (mostly students). Institutional power is felt by students pervasively, on a daily basis. Besides having to comply with academic tasks, students also need to comply with discipline protocols such as having to arrive in the morning on time, arrive to class on time, respect their peers and teachers, respect the use of places and spaces, be at the right place at the right time, respect safety measures, and so forth. These measures are not unique to international schools, aside maybe from safety rules due to risk of terrorist threats towards schools that have an international profile, yet the students' perceptions are specific to their school environment and life stories. In the following section, I share the students' experiences of the mechanisms of power in place in their schools, during which they feel a power relation and/or a sense of power hierarchy.

The equilibrium of each school rests upon the systemic combination of the discipline protocols, all of which are not necessarily evident to the students, and in which they do

not necessarily experience a relation of power. The exercises and perceptions of power I detail here rest upon both an immediacy of the phenomenon of power and on the students' sensory perceptions.

Students seemed to be the most aware of power through the implementation of space and time constraints, assessment, reprimands, orders and consequences. Chloé, at FASS, said that students feel controlled and monitored and that this control is exercised also via a collection of constraints and rules; whilst Agnès, at BISF, highlighted that “teachers have their own rules sometimes, and even though a teacher isn't present to enforce rules on students, students still conform to the rules”. The section on discipline protocols is extensive which conveys the importance and meaning students attach to these topics.

During their interviews, students appeared to already have some knowledge or intuition of what provides authority, and what can give power. When asked what gives teachers power, students mentioned a whole variety of factors, such as age, experience, the knowledge one has, the authority due to a staff member's position, role and responsibility, personality, simply being an adult, or acting as a group versus an individual. To them, there is not one single source of power, but rather a collection of perceptions that power can be generated from many different contexts and situations. Nevertheless, there are common patterns. As Lodge and Lynch (2000) suggested, the status of expertise and age perceived as legitimate may be at the core of students' disempowerment. For Sara, “there is a difference between the way a student is treated and how a teacher is treated. It's normal [...] when we are an adult, we have lived a life, a student has not”. She added “a teacher has power over me... They are older, have more life experience. They are older so we respect them”. This was illustrated further by Agnès: “[Teachers] have more knowledge so they have more power. The students respect them, and respect is a sort of power, as students will listen to them, because students know that teachers care about what they think”, and by Frances “I think they have power because....it's a hard question...they are older as well”.

Besides age and experience, Sara believed that students actually hand power over to teachers, because they have the ‘knowledge’, “they teach us things”. Maria shares the view that students ‘just follow the rules’, and do what the teachers ask them to do. However, this is in no way a statement of passivity. She felt that “students should have a say in the school because [they] are part of it”, although there is a clear acceptance that students should not have an unconditional voice, or unlimited say:

We should have a say, but only up to a certain extent. Because I know that students are young...And if we had a say in everything, it would not work, so the teachers and the faculty should mostly have a say of what is going on.

As for Joanna, who is new to BISF, she has little awareness yet of hierarchical levels and little experience of power dynamics in play at school. Her limited interpretation is based on being in class with teachers to whom she bequeaths power. She links the position of responsibility to the capacity for exercising power, and links power to the capacity to change things.

The more important you are, the more position you have, the more you can change. The power leads to importance. If you are a teacher, for example Head of Science, you have more importance, it's easier to change something you like.

More so at FASS than at BISF, the personality of the various power-holders (teachers and administrators) was mentioned as one other possible factor in the exercise of power. Matthieu describes well the interaction between personality and position, and how it contributes to the flexibility of power dynamics. He identifies position as a mark of authority and right of power; he also believes that whilst the SSD “holds a hierarchical position, it is also the personality of the person, and their ways with other people that gives the person importance and authority in the school”. The SSD exerts authority through a collection of actions and decisions intended to establish a power differential between students and herself; and sometimes these actions manifest themselves outside regular school protocols. All these “show that she is the one in charge”. Chloé speaks of an incident where she feels that the same director crossed a line, and Chloé explains it as being due to the director's personality. At BISF, some students report feeling similarly about their SSD, saying that his personality is what gives him authority. In the case of both SSDs, there is a dual combination of position and personality, and one might feed the other. Personality may also play a role with teachers. Agnès, for instance, reports being afraid of one of her language teachers: “She is stricter than others, she picks on students who are not so good, who are the worse, the ones who don't do their work. I don't know maybe this is a way to exercise power”. For all these students, such as Chloé, Matthieu and Joanna, power is therefore about both the official and subjective legitimacy, the regard that others have towards the ‘powerful’, and the privileges power infers.

Besides age, experience, knowledge, and personality, some students have suggested other factors that are vectors of power dynamics: the force of group power versus individual power, the familiarity of the place, student popularity, length of time spent in the school, and even financial power, as suggested by Fanny. She questioned the staff's ethical judgment, thinking that it was subjectively coloured by their own biases about "money power" (or what Bourdieu may have recognized as economic capital). Of course, this was her own bias:

I definitely noticed that if students' parents are on the Board, and are big donors, students get treated differently. In my class, there is a boy, he is allowed to use his laptop, and no-one else. Everyone says it's because his parents are on the Board. There are definitely financial elements to power dynamics on the school.

Students thus attribute power to a category of adults (teachers, administrative staff, parents, Board) depending on several factors and on the current situation. How power relates to and impacts the students' individual lives is what directly matters to them. But assessing whether individuals' roles, functions, or actions are relevant to the students stems from a value judgment made by the students themselves. That value judgment is based in part on cognitive knowledge and emotions, emotions such as fear, anxiety anger and frustrations, and in part on the students' own individual subjective (and past) experience. Students also called on their cognitive, emotional and subjective knowledge to identify hierarchical levels.

In effect, most students follow the schools' organigrams without necessarily being fully aware of the hierarchies in place and figure out the order from concrete experiences. Not all students conceptualized the models as fixed entities with immutable levels, with some students having difficulty in figuring out the hierarchy levels. They could think of certain situations where parents and students had occasionally tried to apply some pressure over the leadership, and had succeeded; thus, they were hesitant about the permanence of hierarchical levels, and sometimes they changed their mind after further reflection. Nevertheless, most students propounded a pyramidal model of hierarchical levels of power. Their models demonstrate that hierarchical rapport is a concept intellectually understood by the students; most students were able to situate (place) individuals or groups in relation to one another, always thoughtfully, yet sometimes tentatively. Even Maria, who was not able to visualize a model, knew that power is 'there'. Most considered the students' power generically, instead of individually or in group, except Yasmina; she had difficulty placing students, as she seemed to consider

individual student power more effective and real than students' power as a collective group, a position quite unique and different from most other students; however, her opinion might be coloured by her position on the Student Council.

Appendix G presents a selection of the students' visualization of hierarchical models. Most have a common denominator, which is to have the students holding the least power, then the teachers just above. Many mentioned students and teachers colluding, and actually 'being' on the same level. Maria believed that teachers are occasionally powerless, and not really 'in control', such as Iris who believed that "teachers do not have any more power than students". She mentioned the curriculum, saying that it is not controlled by teachers but by Leadership and the IBO. For her, teachers have 'local' power – that is, in their classroom.

Above teachers, most students place coordinators, then deputy-heads, then directors, and so forth, so this is very similar to what the SSD from BISF thinks. Silvia suggests that teachers surrendered part of their power to the IB programme, and that even "the Head has to listen to the IBO, in order to be an IB school", which aligns, again, with what the SSD said. This is illustrated very well by Silvia:

...The school is controlled by an outside system, the IBO. And, the school says that it has to correspond to the ethos of the IB. The communication between students and the IBO is basically none. And I think that's what kind of obstruct the communication and reflection of students on the school, because teachers say '*we have to do what the IB tells*'.

However, whilst most students recognize Heads as theoretically being the ultimate 'power-holders', they felt Heads had little influence over, or little relevance to, individual students. This mitigated relevance led a few students from both schools (Chloé, Joanna, Léo, etc.) to not include, or deliberately leave out, the Heads of School from their own hierarchical model. They acknowledged the reasons for deliberately leaving them out in that they do not see the Heads of School around school; they felt the Heads do not have any impact on their daily school routines, and do not exhibit any power over them. Agnès said of the Head of School "we don't see him. He does not interact with our grades. So he does not exist that much for us". Matthieu made the same comments about his school's Head:

(The Head) we hardly see him, he never talks to us. We have no contact with him, whilst the Secondary School Director, we see her all the time. If we make noise in the corridor, she comes out to tell us to be quiet, and if there are issues in school, she is the one who gets involved.

Agnès's remark implies a connection between lack of interaction, invisibility, and lack of relevance. The '*sensory absence*' of perceived power described here does not allow much assessment of anything other than what is perceived. So, even if some students acknowledged that *knowledge* of power is sometimes enough to feel it, it seems as if for many of these students it is the (even occasional) concrete sensory experience that made them judge whether it was meaningful or relevant to them, and in that case, the Head's 'legal/rational' authority (Weber, 1958) is not 'enough' to warrant a place in the hierarchy. Other elements come into play, such as meaningfulness, relevance, emotions and feelings.

Heads are the ultimate pedagogical authority at school, and parents are the ultimate authority at home. However, just as for Heads, parents' place on the hierarchical models is inconsistent. Maybe this shows a non-modernist view of power in that what students could/would expect from a hierarchical position is actually debatable and challenged by the dynamics in place.

To students, the position of parents in the hierarchy is ambiguous. However, whilst parents are sometimes represented as being outside the hierarchical model, they certainly are not powerless. Célia and Matthieu thought that their parents had enough power to influence change in discrete occurrences, yet felt that parents did not systematically hold 'a right of power' as they are 'outside' the school system; so, they did not include them within the hierarchy model, but still kept them as 'satellites' holding potential (and latent) power. The students' perception of the parents being 'outside' the hierarchical model conveys the concept that parents are 'geographically' outside the school physical space, rather than being outsiders of the whole school *system*. The outside position does not take power away from them, especially in an international school.

Léo often compared his past French school and his current international school. He had already noted that parents in his current school, BISF, have a different role. Léo placed the teachers below the parents, as he believes that parents can come in to complain about teachers and be influential. Asked what makes him think that - knowing that his mother is a teacher-, he said that it comes from the power of money that would give them the power to intervene and change things. At the same time, he understood their role more as an 'interventionist and remediation' role (for example against 'bad' teachers) than as a 'participative' role, although he did reckon that parents have a tool,

the PTA, to use as a means to request changes, make improvements, or be influential in any way.

As seen earlier, several students referred to adulthood and position as being criteria for holding power. For Matthieu and Ju-lieta, being an adult was not seen as the main criterion to justify a place at the top of the hierarchical ladder. They both included the maintenance staff in the hierarchical pyramid, and acknowledged their importance, yet placed them ‘at the bottom’ of the pyramid, i.e. with the least power. Matthieu’s view was that the maintenance staff have no less nor more power than the students but are ‘*less important*’ in school, mainly because they would be outside the ‘learning/teaching’ system. In his eyes, it was the *relevance* to them as students that situated the person on a particular level of the hierarchical pyramid - if a pyramid it was-. Whilst the title or the position is ‘in the absolute’ the premise for power, it is not in itself enough to explain the existence and the effect of power on others. The examples given above regarding the maintenance staff and the Heads (and to some extent the parents too) highlight then that ‘adulthood’ may not be the sole criterion of power-holding in the eyes of students; and that the position or title of the person is not always the guarantee of being seen as holding power.

It was thus either any combination of several factors - age, experience, relevance, personality, hierarchical position of authority, integrated knowledge of power dynamics, or sometimes one sole strong factor, that were mentioned as key criteria to assess or perceive the power of an individual or group of individuals. That perception of power can be reinforced or triggered by mechanisms of power, such as the regulation of space and time.

Both FASS and BISF are open spaces in cities and not enclosed within walls. Buildings of both schools spread over a large area, and students occasionally need to move from one end of the campus to another within a limited time (for a change of class, for example). Their space is therefore controlled via a spatial and temporal organization. Within the schools’ spaces, areas are provided for students to study and/or rest, such as the student lounge, reserved for the last two grade years, “where we can just about do anything”, said Sara. At BISF, the lounge is their territory “teachers come from time to time, but they don’t tell us ‘*don’t do this, don’t do that*’, it’s a space just for us”, however, even if they can “work, have fun, rest”, there still exists the limitation of behaving appropriately, which is accepted by all. At FASS, the use of the

student lounge is to rest and study, yet silence is required, and this is not accepted very well by students who feel they do not have a territory of their own. So, whereas students do benefit from ‘free’ spaces, the stricter the use, the less accepted it is by the students. Other spaces designated for their own specific use are the library, for all students, and some special areas in corridors which have easy chairs. The use of the corridors is limited, and at FASS students are only allowed to hang around corridors at certain times: “we do not have the right to hang around the corridors during break. We must either go to the cafeteria, or stay outside the building. If it rains, it’s annoying”, said Matthieu. At the same time, he accepts it, as long as he gets an explanation, as it is different from his past experiences and perceptions of discipline in his French school: “In France, teachers can just punish you [for nothing], they harass the student, [...] and if people ask, they punish even more... I just need explanations”.

Célia gives an example of the limitation of geographical space, territory and movement. When they have no class, which she considered as ‘free time’, senior students must go to the school library or the students’ lounge to study or read books, and she said students are resentful of this, as they find it constraining. She has also mentioned that the space outside the school campus is restricted and controlled, including streets nearby, where a teacher acted as an authority-holder, an anecdote that I mentioned above. In this case, the boundaries are geographical, and perceived as over-rigid.

Joanna underlined a paradox related to restrictions imposed on students by asking them, for example, to not hang around after school. One of the reasons is related to safety. Since the 2015 and 2016 terrorist attacks in France (Charlie, Bataclan, Nice), security measures have been put in place in both schools, and students’ usage of space has been more closely monitored, especially when outside the school buildings in the case of BISF. Sara said she feels safer with more guards around the school; however, she added that “it’s a constraint to not be able to stay outside the gate for more than 5mins”. On the whole, though, students did not seem to feel especially constrained by the additional security measures and were treating them as other constraints accepting, in this context of security, the rules imposed by the bodies carrying legitimate authority, the schools’ leaderships. Another reason for controlling students’ time and space is to ensure that students get to class on time. Similarly, BISF and FASS students respectively get two 15-minute or 20-minute breaks every day, and students are supposed to stay on campus. In some way, the restricted time and space may serve the school by ensuring safety for the students and ensuring that students arrive to class on

time as it limits and controls time between classes and between buildings. As Joanna remarked, the school provides only two sofas indoors for about 300 Middle School students, and a small students' room for juniors and seniors only. When Joanna says "we need more space, if they don't want us outside", it is clearly a strong statement, a claim. "I understand it's not safe outside, but it's really the only place you can go [...]". The school is felt as "pre-emptively" taking away elements that would give students more freedom. "I think there is nothing they can do for the limitation, but also do not want us to go somewhere else". Joanna's perception, therefore, is that the school finds an indirect way to impose space and time constraints, and Valeria agreed: "[Our] movements are controlled".

Different grades acquire different areas, and make them into their own territories; they have their own ways to make it happen. For instance, Grade 11s have "kind of kicked G12 out [of the student lounge]", said Yasmina... "Now [G12] go to the library...[...] we have created more of a social spot for us...a social melting pot". Henriët confirmed, "[Grade 11] took it over", taking over the coffee machine, making lots of noise, when G12 needed silence to study. The exercise of power, in this case, was established 'sensorially' and spatially. Dreide told of a similar strategy to monopolize a classroom and establishing it as their own. Fanny feels very territorial with regards to one of the library's corners "I [use] the library, I have one particular spot that I like... If someone takes my spot, it will... I'll be a little annoyed that they took my spot...", accepting there are limitations to her 'power of occupation'.

Students have, regarding school spaces, a clear opinion about their rights, about what they feel their rights are, and what other people's rights are. As both schools are city schools, space is limited and students need to be creative if they want more space.

Around the school campus (that is, not inside the school, but in the adjacent areas), students claim space to make it their own. For instance, a café nearby BISF, '*Mon Café du Coin*' (a pseudonym) is used by the students and staff to get snacks and lunch. Many students hang around the place, feel comfortable there, establish routines, and transform this public space into something which becomes familiar and comfortable; some students, like Joanna, make it their own, even if they are not supposed to for safety reasons. ... "We hang around the corner...that's a student area...I would say that's an area that belongs to students". Léo agreed that '*Mon Café du Coin*' is a place students can hang around without being controlled. Sara mentioned a small street with benches right close to the school, where students like to sit and relax or have lunch. Whilst this

is not school ground, students feel they own the space despite having limited use of it, as the school guards order them to move away if the students stay out too long. There is therefore a transformation of a public territory into a more personal or collegial territory. This transformation may be guided by the need to ‘feel at home’ again in a foreign territory, or simply to choose a space they can ‘own’ without being subjected to teachers’ control. Joanna added “[we] need a space where the students go to, and feel the desire to feel separate from the teachers... [students] need a break, that’s normal”. These two examples illustrate how students can respond to mechanisms of power by creating, in this case, their own unsupervised spaces. Chapter Six reports and analyses the most common reactions and responses to power dynamics that students shared during their interviews.

CHAPTER SIX

STUDENTS' REACTIONS AND RESPONSES TO POWER DYNAMICS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Students usually feel on the 'receiving end' whenever they are confronted with power dynamics - that is, they feel they are the object of the power relation. They may then feel a spectrum of emotions like powerlessness, frustration, pressure (from teachers or parents), control, constraints, criticism, reprimand, stress and anger. However, are all of these students' responses solely *negative* reactions to counteract authority? Iris, who reports being aware of power dynamics, said that she has never wanted to question school protocols, as she would be too scared to do so: "At school, I would be a bit scared to do so... I always arrive on time, I do my homework...". Ines associates rules with power, and associates the response to the rules with 'power dynamics'. Yet, she also associates a lack of resistance to the rules with a 'no-response' and therefore no power dynamics. However, all reactions (whether it be acceptance, resistance or avoidance) are of interest in terms of dynamics, and are meaningful in terms of individuals' empowerment and disempowerment. In the following section, I address the responses that students exhibit and the strategies that they adopt to cope with and/or adapt to situations of power.

Those situations of power are intended to regulate and normalize students' learning and well-being. Students' responses, such as procrastinating, resisting rules or refusing to comply, can at times appear to be predictable and controllable by authority. However, the same student might comply with rules and tasks, and *next*, resist or bypass the rules. They might procrastinate, negotiate deadlines, refuse to comply with their homework, and *next* fulfil all requirements. Students might resist authority, and *next* ally with teachers, or accept the school hierarchies. From a postmodern viewpoint, these behaviours show a student world which can be paradoxical, and whose behaviours can shift, depending on, or reacting to, their perceptions of power. However, the latter are themselves systemically linked with others' experiences of power, such as teachers' expression of authority and parental pressure for better grades. The following sections shed light on how students respond to their own perceptions of power with regards to homework processes, communication, and management of time and space.

6.2 RESISTING AND/OR BYPASSING RULES

Teenagers resisting rules and being strongly opposed to rules are clearly not behaviours solely specific to BISF and FASS students. In fact, the data indicates that few students, in these two schools, resist or bypass rules to a point that would be highly conflictive or detrimental to their studies. When they do, it is apparently caused by cultural issues, too much pressure, a problematic relationship teacher/student, and personal narratives. Examples of students not following rules are, according to students from both schools: skipping class, smoking outside allowed spaces, playing computer games during class, misbehaving in class or in assembly, not doing their homework, using phones during class, arriving late in class, etc. Camila feels that some of these behaviours are not “purposely trying to defy [school] rules... it’s not necessarily to go against the teacher, [it’s] just because they would rather play”. Agnès, similarly, believes that using the phone in class is not an act of power: “[Students] just want to use the phone, it’s not because they want to annoy the teachers”, even if they don’t associate their behaviour with disrespect or confrontation. Their understanding of ‘not following rules’ would therefore be an active choice. This is the same kind of reasoning as Camila uses when she assumes a zero grade as a deliberate choice. Deliberately not complying with the teacher’s rules and learning expectations is acting out a non-compliance with authority. Yet, is it a deliberate act of reclaiming power? It is not for Camila and Agnès, yet this is what Frances seems to think. She tells of a student who deliberately provokes the teacher by not doing any work in class:

[the student] does not listen, he sits there on his laptop, he does not do homework, he does not do any work... He sees the teacher as just another person, not someone who is in control...[...] The naughty people, the ones who don’t pay attention in class, they see themselves over the teachers...

The use of the word ‘over’ is telling, in that it indicates the belief that there is a hierarchy, and that by acting out, students are (sometimes unconsciously) reversing the hierarchy and therefore reclaiming power. Fanny believes that the only way to regain/reclaim power is to opt out, which is a more passive way to make a statement of going ‘against’ authority:

I think the most instructive way to regain control is to opt out of the system altogether. There are definitely students who have opted out...They don't care which grades they get, they don't necessarily respect the teacher. There is that danger when you don't give students enough. You can also be too lenient [...] or too strict, and it can cause students to opt out.

In these examples, the students' reclaiming of the power occurs by either disrespecting the teachers or by opting out. For example, some students opt to not go to class. "There are [students] who are absent all the time, and who say they were tired", says Léo.

Complaining about a teacher, displacing feelings, not complying with a homework task, procrastinating, using pretexts for not doing it, or even finding alternative 'control-free' spaces as mentioned above, are different ways to bypass rules. Léo said that these methods are frequently used by students. "Sometimes I don't do the homework, and wait for something to happen. [I gain time]...It's a technique used by many, but not a good one...Or we make up excuses", he adds, laughing. Silvia said she uses a similar method:

At one point, if I decide that something is too much, I stop doing it, and I won't come to school the next day. If the teacher asks for it, why I did not do it, I give my reasons, and teachers listen to [me] and appear to believe [me] if the reasons are 'reasonable'.

Actually refusing to do the work was Léo's way to 'resist'. So, when he decides to not comply with a task, he reports waiting till further notice from the teacher. He might end up doing the work, but he has gained time (and the illusion of controlling his life).

For Camila, resisting is a self-directed, self-assumed decision. She said "I have never really seen [controlling my homework] as a sort of power thing. More just that I am making a decision based on what would seem most logical and rational". Although "the rules weigh on [her] decision, whether [she] should do it or not", she said that rules are not the ultimate deciding factor. It could be argued that the simple consideration of rules implied that Camila recognized a power differential, yet she did not see this as reclaiming control.

I think that it's not [reclaiming control] because it's not like the school would be able to force me to do the homework either way. It's just that the school puts in place certain rules, that would encourage students to do their homework; but it seems like it's not illegal in terms of school rules to not do your homework. It's just that if you don't do it, you get a zero...[...] It's not like [the school] can actually force the students to follow the rules.

Camila establishes a difference between the ‘illegality’ and the acceptance of consequences (a ‘zero’). For her, there is no necessity to reclaim power, because there is actually ‘no power differential’, even though there is (an accepted) existence of rules. Again, for her, there was ‘no power differential’ because she had the individual freedom of choice to choose or not to do the homework. She did not conceptualize the teacher’s capacity to give a zero as evidence of the existence of a power differential, and did not see her own ability to choose as an act of resistance, for in her perspective, she never let go of her own self-governance.

To some respect, this is the case for Matthieu, as he fully accepted the consequences for not doing his homework. He articulated well the deliberate choice, risks, and benefits of not complying:

Whatever we decide to do, or not do, a few teachers will not say anything... Yet if they want to punish us for our [behaviour], because they have the authority to do so, logically, they will give us a bad grade. But this [boils down to] the students’ desire to have some power, the desire to be free; yet as the people above us do not like it, they will punish us to stay at the bottom...

Matthieu is expressing a power differential between teachers and students, and an underlying risk between the students’ strong desire to gain a feeling of freedom and the consequences for resisting.

Ju-lieta seems to take full responsibility for not complying with her homework but it is hard to assess whether this is avoidance or self-punishing (even self-destructive) behaviour on her part.

When [my parents] come and see what I do, and tell me ‘*do your homework*’, I say ‘*okay, then*’ so that they leave And then I don’t always do it. It’s just to get rid of them... to get rid of them rather than get rid of the work! [...] I escape... They never come back to tell me ‘*you have not done your homework, that’s really serious!*’ Consequences are my grades, and that yes, that eventually catches me up.

It would only be self-punishment if importance were given by the student to grades and to the teachers’ evaluation of the student’s performance. In Ju-lieta’s case, she admitted later that whilst she was not being rebellious, she was possibly waiting for an adult intervention; by doing so, she was handing power over to the adults; “to be better for me, it might be that it’s better that [adults] have more power...” One could argue in this case that whilst Ju-lieta’s behaviour is still a choice (to not do the work and wait for consequences), her choice is driven more by a desire for non-engagement than a

deliberate choice to hand over power. However, is this still a form of power? In terms of promoting learning autonomy, one can wonder how this form of ‘non-engagement’ promotes autonomy of learning. It is impossible to determine the reasons for Ju-lieta’s non-engagement and apparent ‘laid-back’ approach. It could be explained by a history of having previously learnt in a strict environment and now feeling unstructured in an environment that promotes independent study; or partly explained by her personal story, and possible stress due to too much pressure and/or learning difficulties or even, paradoxically, by efficient independent study skills. There may be a case to be made here that a stricter, or at least more structured, learning environment for Ju-lieta might induce better performance (when others might choose non-engagement). In the short-term, there could be evidence of that, yet I have no evidence for long-term efficiency. An example of what could be considered as ‘self-punishing’ behaviour is illustrated by Célia when she refused to go and talk to the SSD, as requested by her teacher, because she had been talking in class. She felt this was an unfair punishment and authorized herself a temporary powerful moment, aware of the risk attached to refusing to comply: “It was a risk to do this, and in fact it did not work, as I could not return to class. And I had to go [and see the Director]”. Her teacher (who is a friend of the SSD) reported the incident to the Director, and Célia was ‘found out’, hence felt that staff had rallied against her; her ‘act of resistance’ against authority became less effective as she felt that two teachers allied with one another ‘against’ her. It is hard to say whether Célia’s gain was to reclaim some power or to make a statement that the treatment she received was unfair (or both). However, for Célia, the result appeared to be ineffective in that she could not return to class until she went to see the SSD.

Is power illusory then for as long as and until it proves to be non-effective? Was it really power that Célia exerted if it did not result in any gain? In other words, is power ‘real’ power if it proves to be ‘ineffective’? However, what matters is Célia’s perception that she *could* resist the punishment and acted on it. Her act of resistance is questioning the disciplinarian norm, and is way to reclaim power and assert herself. The schools ensure that their students conform to the institution’s norms by monitoring and regulating their movements, their timetable, even their spare time both at school and, to a certain extent, at home. Subsequently, one of the most frequent ‘power reclaims’ that students make is about time and space. Based on what students expressed during the interviews, they either claimed more (or different) time and space because they felt that their attribution by the school was not adequate enough; or, alternatively,

they reclaimed time and space if they felt they had lost either or both (such as through the school's relocation of spaces that students considered as their territories, or after changes in schedules or protocols). Time and space re(claiming) can overlap or be interdependent. One of the expectations at BISF is for students to work during their study periods. Students call these periods 'free time', which could be seen in itself as some form of resistance. Sara admitted, laughing, that if one of her 'free' periods happens to be straight before, or straight after, lunch, she takes the time to go and "have a café instead of working". This is certainly not a significant act of resistance, yet it does carry a similar meaning in a school where studying is highly valued (at least she experiences it as such). So, not only does Sara 'overstretch' her school time by staying off campus longer, but she also opts out of studying. She also expands the school space by staying out of school when she should be in. She is very assertive about this. This represents her 'studying philosophy', which she also carries over to home. Sara reclaims time and space by making it clear that she keeps her private life well separated from school life when she decides to "not do [her] homework and go and see her friends instead". She adds "I have better things to do in life than go to school, and better things to do than write an essay during 4 hours". This strong statement is not only about the right to autonomy and developmental growth; it is also existential, for Sara's life experience (which has not always been a happy one, impacted by a significant loss) gives her the drive and meaning to make her own life choices and to control her time and delivery of school work. This is an example of how personal lives, and in particular here unexpected events can have an impact on power relations in school. Students therefore may resist against mechanisms of power (regardless of their importance or their frequency), may bypass rules, and reclaim spaces. Others may negotiate deadlines, which is not necessarily a way to resist or bypass a rule; or, they simply might prefer to communicate with the teachers, like Valeria: "By going against the teachers [...] you [go] against the rules of the school, because you owe the teachers respect ... Also by [not complying with tasks], you are going to do something bad for yourself".

6.3 NEGOTIATING DEADLINES

The negotiation of deadlines is a common occurrence both at FASS and especially at BISF. This can be explained by a combination of several factors which, together, create a situation that is favourable to negotiation.

The international nature of the schools generates a community that promotes a family-like atmosphere. This is especially true for FASS, as the French community becomes the ‘home away from home’ for many families (and teachers). Moreover, the IB mission, through its focus on formative assessment and learning through inquiry, develops a close partnership between the learner and the teacher. Consequently, teachers usually become close to their students. This further generates a feeling of safety and narrows the power distance between teachers and students. Matthieu comes from the French system, and he has been pleasantly surprised at the closeness between FASS teachers and their students.

Teachers, here are different. I like them all, they make me want to study, and have good grades. At the beginning of the year, it was different, I was still very much used to the French system, but then I talked to my Science and Math teachers...In France it is different.

In France, Matthieu chose to not apply himself in certain subjects because “[he] liked to get on [the teacher’s] nerves”. This was his own way to re-empower himself. Here at FASS, he chooses to work less in certain subjects for strategic reasons; he exercises power, yet with a different mindset (more negotiation, less resistance).

Students at FASS and BISF are from educated, middle to upper-middle classes (such as from artistic milieus, business, academic and diplomatic circles). Parents benefit from resources linked to their individual social class capital (socio-economic status and advantages, diplomatic advantages, educational values, cultural networks) and these skills and resources can be transmitted to their children and induce educational profit for them. In effect, it is possible that these students are more confident, accustomed and exposed to lobbying and negotiating for their wants and needs through social contacts at home and family narratives, that is from the family cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1972/1977 & 1986). With regards to school work, students in both schools fight for extensions of deadlines or better grades, rather than drop out or refuse to do their work. Educational standards are high, and academic pressure easily builds up, especially from Grade 10 upwards.

The data showed that all of these factors put together - that is, a small power distance, a closeness between teachers and students, a high level of motivation and confidence, an ability to self-advocate - seem to indicate that students are equipped to negotiate deadlines or try to reduce homework tasks, and usually be successful at it. Iris reported “teachers are open and move deadlines”. Léo was in agreement with that statement, “we tell [teachers] we won’t be able to [complete the assessment on time] and it often works...”

Frances has negotiated deadlines before; not because “[she] can’t be bothered” (with studying), but because she had too much work: “I have done that before. I had a lot of work, I had to...I emailed [the teacher], and asked if I could move the presentation... and she was okay.” This excerpt highlights the value and use of electronic communication in the negotiation between teachers and students.

Agnès’s point of view showed that students perceive negotiation in many different ways, and each student’s approach takes root in his or her own family and school stories. Agnès makes a pertinent remark, comparing students’ attitude towards a teacher versus towards their parents. She believes that compliance is driven by feelings of safety, attachment, and fear of damaging the teacher-student relationship:

At home, I can tell my parents what I want and not want to do. I do respect my parents, but in a way, I respect teachers, not more but differently. I can negotiate with my parents more. [...]. Parents, even if they punish us, we still love them, and they love us... At school, if you annoy teachers, and they don’t like you anymore, it’s going to change the relationship.

This fear of jeopardizing the teacher-student relationship is shared by Ju-lieta to the point of solely negotiating with her parents, and not with teachers: “I would be too scared to approach them”. I showed in Chapter Five that cultural factors, according to Hofstede *et al.* (2010), can provide an explanation for the distance that students and parents from a particular culture place between themselves and authority figures. Ju-lieta seems to recognize this and explains her mindset by suggesting that Asian people are self-effacing. Ju-lieta added:

I don’t negotiate deadlines, I just don’t hand in [the work] on the due date and say that I will hand the work in another day [...] but it’s not negotiation, as it’s me who decide and say on which day I will hand in the work.

Ju-lieta believes that ‘delaying the work’ means that she is keeping the control. Her power is temporary and, paradoxically, seemingly passive. One can wonder then

whether a ‘passive power’ is actually ‘power’, as she actually ends up handing the power over to the teachers, as she lets them ‘execute’ the consequences for the work she has not done, in whatever way they decide, and when they decide. However, as in the case of Léo who gains time in postponing his homework, or Célia who temporarily refuses to see the SSD, Ju-lieta becomes ‘subject’ through this process, regardless of the rationale or result. This ‘subjectivation’ process takes place within a teacher-student power relationship. Indeed, the relationship is at the base of all power relations, whether students feel safe enough to request deadlines and negotiate, or not.

6.4 STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

Students’ appreciation and trust of teachers is not unconditional. Students were, of course, critical of certain teachers during the interviews. Nevertheless, there seems to be trust, complicity and familiarity between students and teachers, which can possibly be explained by the nature, context, and size of the schools. Frances explains this complicity, although with some misgivings maybe due to respect towards the position that teachers hold: “I think some students would say that particular teachers... (*hesitating*)...are not very helpful, and sometimes other teachers would agree with that.” In certain circumstances, students and teachers collude in order to feel supported and more empowered. Students reported during their interviews that some teachers share their opinions about Leadership with their students, in particular with their homeroom/advisory class. For example, Maria said that in homeroom, students and teachers

talk about rules, and something, like, the students don’t agree with the school, and the teachers agree with the students... and a student said we should email the school, and the teacher says that is a good idea.

Iris agreed:

Students and teachers [in this school] have strong connections. I know students who have really a huge connection with some teachers. We can tell them everything. To know that there are some teachers who can support us in making things change, with whom we can share ideas, who listen to us...

I have shown that student-teacher connections may take root, at least in the students’ perception, in the feeling that students place themselves on a similar hierarchical level

as teachers - or just below. That connection can occasionally be transformed into an alliance, which serves the management of power relations, such as through negotiation. Sometimes, the student-teacher connection occurs due to a different process, mostly psychological. When members of the school community (parents, teachers and students) feel 'powerless' during the course of any educational process, or any kind of interaction, they may respond in different ways. They may choose to accept the situation of powerlessness, for whatever reason that might be (psychological narrative, acceptance of authority, recognition of necessity to do so). They may choose to resist, negotiate and reclaim space to re-empower themselves. Alternatively, they might find, consciously or not, a power-surrogate alternative that I label 'power by proxy'. In effect, in a situation of powerlessness or disenfranchisement, an individual or a group may feel that they need to rely on the authority of an external agency to embody power they feel they do not themselves possess.

The process of transforming powerlessness into 'powerfulness' is analysed here outside any kind of value judgment; my intent is not to judge the message behind the expression of the voice, but rather to examine the process of expressing one's voice, as well as any dynamics attached to the process. The data indicated that this has happened with a few teachers who were in disagreement with administration over a particular reform for which they had not been previously consulted, and who felt powerless about a reform that concerned themselves and the students directly. They shared their feelings with their classes, and students felt empowered simply through the act of becoming the recipient (and surrogate) of their teacher's frustrations. Occasionally, this psychological 'power-by-proxy' process might be a part of student-teacher connection.

6.5 PARENTAL INTERVENTIONS

Establishing alliances can also happen within the family, such as students asking parents to intervene on their behalf to require something from school, to dodge or bypass rules, or to react to what they feel is an unfair school intervention. One example would be asking them, for example to write a note to justify their missing class.

It is a stretch to imagine that each and every student would complain to his or her parents about the school or about a teacher, with the aim of having their parents speak on their behalf. Nevertheless, from what is reported by students, some students occasionally turn to their parents to complain to Leadership about a teacher, ask their

parents to push the school for a higher grade in a particular subject, or to restore the relationship between a teacher and their child. However, students do not request their parents' intervention solely to complain about teachers; and sometimes parents intervene on their own initiative. Sara articulates this clearly: "[parental intervention] depends on what the parent wants, and on what the child wants their parent to [be aware of]".

Joanna says of her friends "...if they complain about a teacher, their mom is going to come in and complain about the teacher". It is unclear whether this is a deliberate attempt by the student to ask the parents to intervene on their behalf. This was second-hand information, and has to be taken with circumspection. What is important, however, is that this was the participant's perception of what occasionally occurs. This is confirmed by several other students such as Léo who said "we can change small things, but we will never be directly involved in decision-making; part of our power goes through our parents. We talk to them, and they can intervene". For him, as he has mentioned before, the power comes from money and the 'customer status' that the parents have, which gives them "control over bad teachers".

Rarely, students - and parents - want some official action against a teacher or other member of staff. To get an official sanction, parents would then go straight to the Board. This can be effective, as demonstrated at FASS when parents complained about a teacher. However, this is a rare event, and not always successful. Yasmina's perception was that if the Board is determined, there is little the parents can do. This was the case for the change in the timetables, with periods going from 50 to 45 mns: "It's the Board that decided, and when the Board decides, that's it". There seemed to be some confusion here about who retains the decision-making and decision-taking power. Educational and managerial decisions mostly belong to the school leadership, not the Board, although the Board is responsible for the general and long-term vision of the school and for approving certain school decisions. Yet, the student does not seem cognizant of this.

As mentioned above, the data points to students occasionally turning to their parents, asking them to intervene on their behalf (usually with Leadership) not solely to complain about a teacher, but also to discuss other issues, such as a matter that has upset them. This is what Yasmina did when she reported having suffered from 'racial jokes', as mentioned earlier in the *'multicultural environment and context'* section.

Another example of parental intervention is when students turn to their parents, who then turn to other parents to get something organised. The following example tells of power dynamics happening outside the regular school organisation of events. An event (end-of-year prom) was initiated by a few students. There was very little general interest, and some parents took it on themselves to appeal to other parents to raise money for the prom.

Students are aware of the home-school dynamic, and understandably use this to their advantage for support and/or to respond to their needs. However, despite the influential advantages that the 'client status' may potentially bestow upon parents, their requests are naturally not always granted if the school's interests or plans are contradictory to the parents' wishes. For instance, Fanny's parents contacted the SSD and the IB coordinator to alter the schedule to make it possible for her to take the subjects she preferred, and the request was turned down. Chloé explained about a new school programme that both students and parents found non-essential and time-consuming: "Parents and students were against the programme, as they could not see the benefits. When we were in class, we couldn't see any point, and after, we felt we thought of what we could have done instead ...". Despite a strong parental intervention, the programme was maintained. Chloé gave another example of her mother trying to "negotiate more English classes for [her] sister", in vain. Although these examples are anecdotal, they demonstrate both resignation and acceptance that parental and student influential power is limited. Most students recognize their relative 'powerlessness', at least executively and institutionally. Several students still proved to be creative and proposed several models where power would be redistributed. However it did prove to be difficult for them to move away from the traditional hierarchical model.

6.6 STUDENTS' NEW IDEAS

As many of the prior examples have shown, students are often demonstrating creative and critical thinking towards powerlessness (or power in general), and some students have proposed new ideas to either change the school system or improve it. This last section suggests some of those new (and at times innovative) ideas, which in themselves seem to testify to a desire to re-empower themselves (even if those ideas are not completely elaborated).

Students accept the legitimacy of consequences when they have not complied with their tasks and assessments; yet, in both schools, students question the communication process with parents in case of non-compliance. Most students are comfortable with their parents knowing, yet would prefer to be informed first, especially when they are older - like Maria, who summarized,

I don't mind if teachers send emails to parents. I would prefer if they talked to me first [...] I feel, like, I am already in G10, they should come and talk to me first. If I were younger, yes, I wouldn't mind them emailing my parents, but they should talk to me first, then email my parents,

or Célia, who raised an interesting point. She thought it is essential for students to know about their teacher's complaint first, otherwise "[students] lose some power if when we come home and our parents know before us. They are already in a bad mood, and less open to what we might say". A complex balancing act of communication between the three sub-systems happens if and when students do not comply with doing their homework. Asked whether teachers should inform parents when they have failed to do their homework, students usually reply that they should only if this is a repeated behaviour. As Yasmina said, "I mean... You have to find a balance...If the student does that all the time, of course..."

Ju-lieta proposed a model where parents' and students' respective power levels would move up and down, depending on the context. Yet, Ju-lieta still believed in some order of legitimate hierarchy and she specified that if students' power can go up and down, it never reaches higher than Leadership. As for Silvia, she thinks 'systemically', where one change in one part of the system leads to an impact on the rest. It also implies that every stakeholder of the system is important; she suggests "a system in which you have pillars [...] you have the pillar of the IB, [...] the pillar of staff, teachers, coordinators, and then you have the pillar of the students". She says that power belongs to all, and "if you take away any of the pillars, school will fall". Both of these students see the redistribution of power improving by introducing some *flexibility* into hierarchical levels, within certain limits. Iris's vision of student (re)empowerment is a form of democratic power in school, where students would get more involved by voting on educational reforms that would serve them better: "We are not going to redo the system, it works well, but sometimes [teachers and Leadership] don't understand that we could learn more easily if we changed teaching techniques".

This is a central point in the relationship power/student power/learning. Iris acknowledges the potential good results at her school; yet, she still questions the whole culture of learning and suggests it should be revisited.

Joanna suggested that there is not necessarily a need for an organized structure to demonstrate that students have a voice. However, her way of explaining her ideas was confused. It was more intuitive than fully elaborated (which is not surprising in itself, given the interviewing context), yet it demonstrates an insight into the understanding of 'voice'. She promotes a kind of 'receptive and empathic system', that is, having receptive teachers; teachers who *hear* students at any time, who are respectful of students' individual time, and who welcome student-led ideas. These ideas convey the teachers' respect for students and the acknowledgement that students 'do exist'. And if they exist, they have a voice. What Joanna felt intuitively was in fact a gadget-free representation of an authentic voice, at least in the daily life of a student. She had difficulty conceptualizing how this could be implemented, apart from through the traditional forum for students' expression.

Few students suggested ideas to 'redistribute' power differentials, and students proved to have difficulty being innovative and diverge from traditional power structures. This may be explained by a variety of reasons, such as not being used to being solicited for ideas, being too used to traditional structures, or feeling suspicious of the potentiality and feasibility of change. Nevertheless, students are able to articulate their perceptions of power relations in an insightful and critical way. They want more opportunities to have power, want to be heard, want to feel that they matter, want to get involved in decision-making, want to be informed when information from school to parents is about them, and voice a need for their own spaces such as Léo who suggested that all secondary students (G6 to G12) should benefit from their own territory, micro-spaces where they would feel safe and 'mostly' in control.

The final discussion, in Chapter Seven, begins with the impact that ISc parameters have on the students, and how they shape power relations between students and adults (teachers and parents). In order to do this, I first use the structure of the initial objectives to visually represent the intertwined power interactions between the different sub-systems. However, the main focus is the students' perceptions and feelings. The way they react and respond to power relations follows its own logic which is outside the

‘objectives structure’. I therefore continue with a discussion of the main foci highlighted by the students.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

I started this study with four main objectives. The first objective was to illuminate how the IB philosophy and the Learner Profile attributes play into the power dynamics between students, members of staff, and parents. The second objective was to map out the characteristics of both international schools and examine how they impact the students' school and personal lives. The third objective was to describe how students experience and perceive authority and power differentials between different constituencies. The fourth and last objective was to shed light on how students respond to, and navigate through, power relations. Empirical data was collected for all four objectives. The data told of students' experiences of power relations as they experienced them through their everyday interactions with staff members as well as with their parents. Before continuing with the discussion, I want to clarify my interchangeable use of the terms 'power relation' (or relation of power) and 'power dynamics'. Both terms convey a relationship of power; however, I use the term 'power dynamics' when I especially want to convey a system of forces. I summarize the situations generated from these distinct, yet interdependent parameters which lead to power relations (Table 8). However, in the students' reality, situations overlap and are interdependent. In effect, most students who prepare the IB Diploma need to comply with homework tasks and deadlines, are taught independent study skills, and are *also* subjected to their parents' (and their own) expectations and cultural narratives. All of these students are part of a multicultural school, are immersed in an international culture, and *also* need to comply with and thus react in a particular way to discipline mechanisms. All students attending the two schools need to comply with the schools' protocols, have time and space constraints, and *also* need to navigate these to develop as competent independent learners.

Objectives	Situations impacted by ISc parameters and leading to perceptions of power dynamics.
#1. <i>IB philosophy/ Learner Profile</i>	Introduction to IB programmes and philosophy. Distribution and completion of homework. Autonomy of learning (appreciation, difficulties) / independent learning: Tension between IB values and their implementation (or not). Assessment, deadlines Choice of IB options
#2. <i>ISc characteristics and impact on students' lives</i>	Business /private nature of school. Impact of the socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Communication (quantity vs quality, format) Profile of student population (e.g. students coming from French system) Expectations due to socio-economic background of families: tensions due to stress and parental expectations. Focus on universities Expatriate situation of parents (under-, over-involvement of parents) Family narratives, students' narratives Multicultural issues (language difficulties, English language hegemony, conflicts, parental dreams and expectations, cultural dimensions, faculties from different cultures). Boundaries being crossed
#3. <i>Perception of authority, power legitimacy and power differentials</i>	Individual and/or group experience of direct power relation and authority (mechanisms of discipline: protocols policies, code of conduct) that may lead to a confrontation (or not). Time and space constraints Disagreement/conflict between a member staff and students, parents and students, parents and school, students and students etc. (acted upon, or not) Boundaries being crossed Disciplinarian interventions/consequences. Students' voice (having one, or not, or not adequate)
Objective	Students' responses to perceptions of power
#4. <i>Responses to power relations</i>	Claiming a voice Accepting/Resisting rules/Bypassing rules/negotiating. Being punctual/being late in the morning, or to class. Not complying with punishments. (Re)claiming time and space. Establishing alliances. Contacting the director to complain about a teacher. Power by proxy. Contacting the SC. Expressing new ideas.

Table 8– Summary of situations of power

Seen from a postmodern systemic perspective (Montuori & Purser, 1996; Sackney, Walker, & Mitchell, 1999; Robinson & Taylor, 2007), students, enriched by their own individual narratives, thus respond to what may appear as a multitude of discrete, binary power relations, and also to an assemblage of interdependent discourses and protocols across the three main school sub-systems - students, parents, and the school staff. Seen from the students' perspective, students are at the core of a complex, systemic web of dynamics that I conceptualize as a flower-petal visual model of 'Agencies of Power',

generating and regulating relations of power. The AoP model, based on systemic thinking (Ackoff, 1960, 1999; Dowling & Osborne, 1985/1994; Plas, 1986; Dallos & Draper, 2005) tells a story of an ‘open system’ (Katz & Kahn, 1969) through which pervasive power interconnects across the three community sub-systems which are composed of individuals and structures, having agency, that is the potential to exert, facilitate, or confer power to individuals or groups (Fig. 2 – Flower-petal representation of AoP). Through these dynamics of power, individuals and groups may have the capacity (or at least opportunity) to empower and/or disempower, and to influence change.

The inner circle of the flower diagram represents the student sub-system, interdependent with all other sub-systems, and whose perceptions are at the core of this study. The outside petals are part of the open system and represent the interrelated IB philosophy and educational structure; the schools’ private nature and the socio-economic/socio-cultural/multicultural components; and finally, the institutional structures (in particular the internal mechanisms of power). All fields interconnect in some way and are held together through power relations, pedagogical interest, and strategies.

Students like Célia and Matthieu placed parents ‘outside’ the hierarchical levels, yet acknowledged their potential influence and impact on their school life, either directly (homework supervision, help in choice of options, pressure or close monitoring), or indirectly (parenting skills, educational values, involvement in school activities and interventions). I therefore visualize the parents’ sub-system as being partially interconnected with the other sub-systems, latently influential, and visible or not.

Students’ and parents’ narratives are differentiated yet related through their emotions and life stories. At the same time, a structure without individuals who create or implement power is deprived of its potential power. The visual illustrates that empowered and disempowered individuals cannot be detached or considered in isolation from what enriches them with, or from what deprives them of, power.

Therefore, I visualize the ‘Agencies of Power’ model as a construct of individuals and structures, enmeshed with what feeds, motivates, and enhances them both. Agencies of power regroup the key constituents (contexts, narratives, life stories, emotions - such as stress, anxiety, cognition etc.) that provide the means to mobilize power forces (consciously, or unconsciously), exerted from one point (power holder) to another (power recipient), accepting that these power points and benchmarks are flexible and fluid.

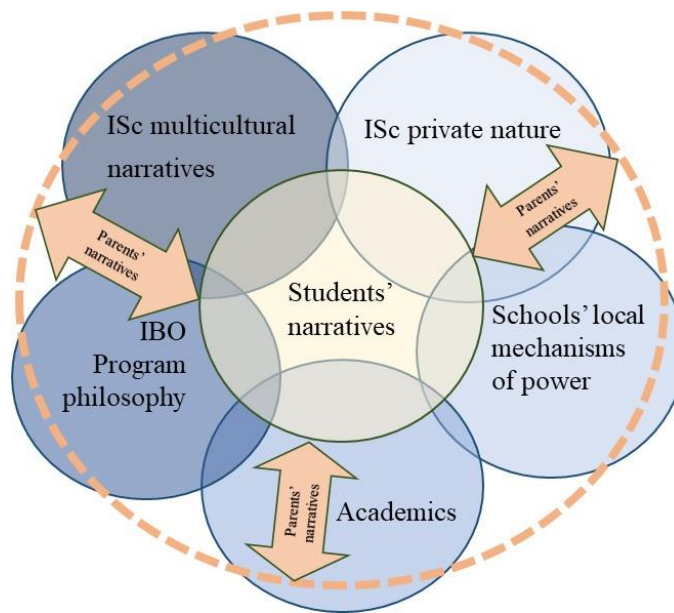


Fig. 2. Flower-petal representation of AoP

The forces circulating between all the AoP are not static - they are dynamic and adaptable; in that, the forces circulating across the AoP are psychodynamic (Dunning *et al.*, 2005; Caffyn, 2013), carrying with them individuals' and institutions' narratives. Individuals enter the school with a history, and have *some* knowledge of what school rules mean, what school codes are, and how an ISc functions. However, they are naturally still exposed to new information. Their fluid knowledge (capacity to solve problems and do abstract thinking) and crystallized knowledge (acquired knowledge) is being continuously 'updated' through their new experiences.

Empowered by the AoP and enriched by their knowledge, the school prerogatives and their life stories, students develop their own agency. The AoP, thus, not only exerts power over individuals and groups, but also enables the development and awareness of power within these individuals. In a postmodern understanding of power (Sackney, Walker & Mitchell, 1999; Taylor & Robinson, 2009), power relations shift and change direction, not always in a predictable way, with flexibility, and depending on the story of the power dynamics themselves.

As mentioned earlier, whilst the AoP are presented visually and structurally, it is important to underline again that in the reality of the students' experiences, those

components are not structured in this way, and are not even necessarily present in students' consciousness.

Students showed sensitivity to power relations in every facet of their everyday school life, whether it be in class, out of class, during their free time at school, with friends, toing and froing from home to school, at home complying with school tasks and so forth, consciously, or unconsciously. Across this spectrum of students' experiences and perceptions of power, several foci were recurrent in their discourse, and I discuss below each one of these foci within the context of the ISc parameters:

1. Students occasionally feel stressed from school and parental pressure and expectations, with school staff occasionally crossing boundaries;
2. Students wish they were more independent in their studies and feel that parents and teachers should trust them more;
3. Students expressed the desire to have their voice recognized, and feel this is not often the case;
4. Related to the previous point, students sometimes feel controlled (in terms of movement, schedules, etc.), and feel subjected to mechanisms of power, sometimes feeling they are arbitrary;
5. Students are sensitive to differences yet also feel a sense of familiarity in their school, and recognize that both generate power relations.

Informed by the works of Bourdieu (1972/1977, 1986), Foucault (1975/1995, 1980), Hall, E. and Hall, M. (1987), Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010), Holec (1979/1981) and others, I conclude the discussion with how all these interdependent and intermingling power relations *and* perceptions contribute to a pervasive circulation of power dynamics. In effect, perceptions are not solely the 'observing consequences' of power relations. They actually contribute to the shaping of the global power dynamics through resistance, struggles, and acceptance.

Stress, pressure, and boundaries

Part of the IB philosophy is to develop students into 'whole individuals'. This is the holistic characteristic of an IB education. IB programmes endeavour to cater not only to the academic development of students, but also to their physical and socio-emotional well-being (IBO, 2013, 2015). However, as we learned earlier from the findings and the

literature on homework dynamics (Ribbens McCarthy & Edwards, 2001; Solomon *et al*, 2002; Forsberg, 2007; Galloway *et al*, 2013), the aim of catering to both the academic development and students' well-being, is not necessarily achieved due to incongruences between the IB philosophy – and especially the LP attributes - and the impact of the AoP.

The IB goal of achieving a holistic development is not necessarily congruent with all individuals' life stories, such as for Sara who considers her mental and physical well-being to be independent of the intellectual aspect of her life; in that particular case, there is a conflict between the IB ethos and the student's 'truth', and this generates power dynamics between the teachers and herself. Other students, such as Dreide and Fanny, experienced stress or pressure due to parental expectations, because of past parental cultural experiences for Dreide, and parents' high expectations generated by her mother's illness for Fanny.

Whether choosing FASS or BISF as an educational option for their children is a deliberate choice, or an opportunity due to professional reasons, the decision to opt for an ISc could ultimately be understood as a socio-cultural investment and reproduction of the parents' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 1987 & 2000). Students recognize the socio-educational power that this opportunity to attend good schools represents. Again, many integrate the privilege they have and are grateful for this opportunity to attend a school that expands opportunities for them. However, the opportunity to choose what is considered a privileged choice of school does not systematically guarantee for the child a carefree, stress-free and successful extension of an existing cultural privilege. For a few students, as we learned from Dreide, the recognition of this opportunity combined with power differentials creates stress: Parental expectations, pressure, and struggles (such as highlighted by Forsberg, 2007); and students' self-impositions due to the private nature of the school, create a feeling of obligation to perform which occasionally creates stress. In turn, stress may create more power dynamics, as it may be expressed with open conflicts or through defence mechanisms, such as splitting and projection, which in turn may impact individuals' behaviours. Students, such as Sara, who prioritizes her well-being over school work, may need to learn to balance their own learning, their personal growth their physical and mental well-being, and reconcile their needs, dreams and expectations with those of their parents - and teachers. This growth does not happen free from frustrations, frictions or stress. If one of the IB goals is for students to learn to become intellectually,

physically and emotionally ‘balanced’ individuals, the holistic approach is not always in synch with individual socio-emotional and psychological needs. Academic pressure combined with other stresses due to cultural adjustment, for instance, can also jeopardize the theoretical well-being postulate. One can thus wonder what the actual contribution of the IB philosophy on the students’ life stories is, and what schools can do to facilitate this further in addition to preparing students for their IB diploma. This is a key example of how all parts of the schools’ sub-systems interact and impact one another (Ackoff, 1960; Ackoff, 1999; Dallos & Draper, 2005; Dowling & Osborne, 1985/1994); and how essential it is for schools to ‘think systemically’, and become cognizant of these interactions.

Learning to be an independent learner

One needs to distinguish the independent learning related to the *academics* (choice of options, choice of title of Internal Assessments, choice of TOK presentations...), from the independent learning related to the *study skills* (time management for self-study, organization). Nevertheless, in either case, becoming an independent learner is a developing process for FASS and BISF students, *apparently* in contradiction with Holec’s views on learner’s autonomy. Holec (1979/1981) talked about autonomy (or ‘self-directed’ learning) as an acquired ability, yet is not fully clear about how and when it would be formally learnt. Bruner (1986, 1996), one of the co-influential educationalists of the IB programme, highlighted the hand-over nature of autonomy of learning. Learning to learn independently is therefore part of a pedagogical process embracing most of the different facets of the IB programme. These IB facets reflect traits and attributes (autonomy, power, voice) characteristically attributed to ‘low-context’ and/or individualist countries (Hall, E. & Hall, M., 1987; Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Ting-Toomey, 1994) which are the countries of the main influential educationalists behind the IB programme⁴. IB educators aim to develop independent learners and competent inquirers by the end of the IB DP programme or, at least, expect that they have integrated the value and some of the skills of independent learning. Notwithstanding, it is not uncommon for students to struggle through the process of becoming independent learners for a variety of reasons. Students may be confronted with the reality of their (sometimes new) ISc lives and the reality of their new personal lives. Students may be attending a new school, a new

⁴ Dewey, USA; Neill, Scotland; Piaget, Switzerland; Bruner, USA

curriculum and a different style of learning. They may be experiencing learning abilities which, as Meltzer (2018) has pointed out, may impact their learning of study skills. Students may be part of an expatriate family with all the family dynamics and adjustments this might entail. Lastly, students are going through their adolescent years and developing skills for university, as Henriët mentioned. Students must therefore learn to navigate through the attractive yet risky field of independent learning, and face potential hurdles due to being in an ISc environment.

If students' independent study skills are encouraged, potential setbacks are considered as learning opportunities and lessons in resilience. However, due to the highly structured assessment IB system, students are not left to their own devices. Their progress is monitored and students are given consequences for tasks handed-in late (or not at all). Parents are regularly informed by email or phone, and may be invited to come in to discuss their child's progress; in that, and as Peters (1966) and Foucault (1975/1995) wrote, schools remain institutions of social control. As the IB coordinators emphasized, structuring information to parents is a way for teachers to structure learning and initiate the students in the process of independent learning.

This educational position is theirs, and also reflects their own schools' structures and systems. Yet, it is not clearly articulated in the IB LP and philosophy. Maybe the reason for this is that it is considered as a normal, non-debatable process, part of schools' policies. It does imply though that it is not considered enough as a 'philosophical point' to be clearly included in the IB philosophy. Involving parents though is on par, for example, with Forsberg's views (2007) who stated that whilst the purpose is to make the child independent and take responsibility for his/her work, children still need to be on par with their parents' wishes and goals. This implies some level of parental intervention. It also reflects the ambivalence - an ambivalence mentioned by Ribbens McCarthy & Edwards, 2001 - between parental interventionism, schools' educational prerogatives and duties, child psychology, and the promotion and endorsement of children's learning autonomy. This results in a complex balance that schools intend to manage, and which students may react to, as we have seen in the students' responses. Systemically, it makes sense that all sub-systems are involved in reaching a balance between parental education and support, learner's autonomy and school.

As we heard from Joanna, Chloé, or Ju-lieta, students are equally ambivalent about the need for parental control and institutional structure, for if they are eager to be independent, they also recognize the necessity to follow certain rules. From a

psychological viewpoint (Dowling & Osborne, 1985/1994), a *certain amount* of social control seems to be recognized by a collective consciousness, and reaches consensus with students, parents, educators, psychologists, and other stake holders. In effect, whilst the system of ‘monitored independent learning’ promoted by the IB coordinators sounds like an oxymoron, the IB coordinators view it as a sound, structured, deliberate IB approach that helps construct the students’ learning, even if this approach is not consciously viewed as social control.

In both schools, students gradually learn to deal with, and most of the time accept, a close monitoring of their performance, and accept close communication between the teachers and their parents. The data showed that this may generate power dynamics between the students and the adults, parents and teachers. Students like Léo, Camila, and Sara have a strong opinion about their own study skills and self-legitimacy to comply (or not) with their academic tasks, and their own lucidity and determination about what they feel is right for them. This is occasionally conflictive with their teachers’ (and parents’) expectations. As for Frances and Ju-lieta, they have their own ambivalences and hesitations with regards to learning autonomy.

Teachers and parents are not necessarily fully trusting of the students’ choices, may be unsure of their motivation and achievement, and may feel they need to exert additional pressure on their student and child to ensure they succeed in their course which occasionally creates frictions. Therefore, one can wonder whether it is reasonable to expect that heuristics are suitable for *all* students, at least at this moment in time in their lives and considering their particular life stories. Part of an answer to this question might simply be that self-disciplining takes time and struggles are part of their self-inquiry and growth process - which in reality is an IB attribute, even if they fail. The process of enabling students to develop a self-regulation of their learning (to use one of Holec’s terms, 1979/1981), supports Rose’s idea that ‘psychology-infused’ “*new social authorities*” (Rose, 1998, p.63) have contributed to individuals developing self-governance. It can be argued that the implementation of the IB programme espouses then a similar epistemological role.

One can wonder what the contribution of the parents can be in the students' integration of this autonomy of learning process. Many students are appreciative of their parents’ support, yet the combination of academic pressure and parental expectations can create tense relationships between parents and children. Several students feel their parents are

interfering in their school lives, and perceive their parents' help and interventions as intrusive. Occasionally, the support is felt as unnecessary, not because the support is seen as intrusive, but because it is perceived as *not needed*, superfluous, because students feel responsible enough, or feel they can manage their study skills by themselves. Often, students are ambivalent, both recognizing the value of parental intervention and pushing it away. However, parental influence or impact on students' capacity to work independently may be indirect, in that it might partly originate from the socio-economic and socio-cultural family story. The combination of ISc parameters amongst the parental population may thus be a greater 'catalyst' of the autonomy of learning than the actual teaching approach.

Students tend to be more resistant to support and guidance if teachers and parents ally. The teacher-parent alliance for academic purposes, as perceived by students, is interrelated with ISc parameters and is occasionally perceived by students as disempowering when they feel that parental and staff 'join forces' against them. Students appreciate and grow from the independent learning skills IB approach. Yet, they simultaneously have to cope with their teachers' and parents' demands, guidance, and 'redirections' while not necessarily managing their time and organizing their studies according to teachers and parents' expectations. Holec (1979/1981) mentioned the precedence of a learning structure within which an autonomous learner may exercise his or her capacity to self-direct or self-regulate. This implies therefore in his perspective that there is no 'autonomy' independent of a structure. In the case of FASS and BISF, which promote the learning of independent learning skills through the IB philosophy, the school pedagogical and academic 'structure' provides a terrain to exercise one's capacity of independent learning. However, this exercise can potentially be compromised and undermined by the school's close monitoring of the students, and by parental pressure. Few students appear to be fully self-directed: Camila chooses to self-direct her performance independently of consequences (external to her own), and Sara reacts affectively and existentially to assignments. They and others are learning to balance the intellectual with the emotional. Individual stress, family and school pressure (Galloway, 2013) or learning difficulties occasionally interfere with the students' ability and mental energy to study independently, and sometimes contribute to students resisting tasks and/or directions, such as for Camila, Ju-lieta, Dreide and Frances.

Students' voice

FASS and BISF promote student voice in various ways, whether it be actively coming from the implementation of the IB philosophy (IBO, 2013) and specific forums such as the SC and homerooms; or as we have seen, from the privileged relationships between staff and students.

So, what do schools appear to do - or not do -? The SSD and Director at BISF acknowledged that the school could do more to increase students' voice. The two schools seem to differ in that if the BISF management team felt as though the school could do more in terms of promoting students' voice, the SSD at FASS felt as though parents and students have 'enough' of a voice, sometimes 'too much' – which she associates with too much power over her.

Students are actively encouraged to communicate with their teachers, reach out for help, advocate for themselves to address their own needs, clarify issues and propose new projects. However, as highlighted by Fielding (2001) and Czerniawski (2012a), not all students are necessarily comfortable reaching out for help due to little confidence, or linguistic and cultural factors, as is the case for Sara. Communication is nurtured, and in some 'non-obvious' way, students' voice is promoted – 'non-obvious' because part of learning independent and cooperative learning skills is *also* about finding one own's voice. Student-led activities and projects involving student management or participation are facilitated, and forums exist where and when students can express their voice (SC, homerooms). However, the SC is considered by a few students as more tokenistic than a truly efficient student voice. Students have curriculum opportunities to make their own choices (choosing curriculum options, choosing themes for written tasks and oral presentations, having opportunities to become an independent learner), and are occasionally consulted through the SC for student matters. Despite these efforts and pedagogical approaches, students occasionally express that they do not have a voice at school as they either do not feel heard by administrative leaders, do not take part in decision-making, feel they are controlled, or feel they do not influence change.

Students are not necessarily aware of all the different kinds of 'voices' they do/could possess. Part of the reason for this is that they do not interpret 'educational voice' as a form of power. Instead, students are more inclined to be aware of 'student voice' when they feel they do not have it.

As mentioned by two members of staff from BISF, the IB communication skills are supported by the socio-economic background of families, which shapes the manners, social skills and confidence of expression of their children, reminiscent of Bourdieu's 'capital' or Rose's notion of hypervigilance for social and educational adjustment in Western families. The confidence through which students express their voice could be partly explained by social skills that the students integrate from an early age. Notwithstanding, as we have learned from Mills (2008), one cannot neglect schools' potential capacity to develop students' agency. Throughout their ISc years, students from different cultural and socio-cultural backgrounds gradually acquire assertive skills and feel more confident in expressing their needs, proposing ideas (such as Yasmina suggesting having a student on the Board - which is actually favoured by the SSD and BISF Director), making claims (such as requesting a smoking corner, or asking to maintain the students' rep system), resisting authority (such as Célia who refused to comply with the SSD's convocation), negotiating deadlines and proposing new projects and alternatives. However, as we have learned from Dreide, Fanny, and Sara, students' voice can be thwarted or enhanced by socio-cultural pressure and family narratives, and this has an impact on their relationships with school staff, and school work.

So, how do they seek an increased voice, whether it be through resistance, actively, or generated by socio-cultural stories? By communicating with teachers, negotiating, resisting, or bypassing rules, students revisit their own power positioning and either find their voice to have their needs represented, or yield to changes made for their benefit. Besides occasional acts of resistance and negotiation, many students paradoxically appear to both self-impose (or at least accept) a restrained voice *and* claim a more effective voice, although not necessarily for the same matter, or to a different degree, or via 'power-by-proxy'. Léo, for example, would like students to be able to change 'small things', yet accepts that students will never be around the main decision-making table. As for Célia, she experienced the change in the students' representative system as a deliberate reduction in students' voice. She says that a school is primarily about and for students, even if she later states that it is normal for staff members to have more power. Students, though, are not always, nor totally, convinced that their contribution is game-changing, and recognize that their power is limited, controlled and contained within institutionalized systems such as the SC and the Homeroom forum.

By contributing to *some level* of innovation and change, and by being able to contribute to reasonably small improvements - small yet important to them -, students get to own a share of the responsibility for the change(s). This gives them a sense of belonging and ownership, which in turn is empowering and necessary for children's growth, as suggested by Mitra (2006). Through these struggles, claims and resistance, students potentially develop their sense of selves and, as Foucault conceptualized, may be "made subject" (1982, p.777).

However, negotiation, resistance and 'collusion' are not necessarily an authentic and trustful representation of student voice and reciprocal learning. These perceptions seem to convey the sense that students do not feel that their schools have structured, developed and implemented a culture of learning which integrates a non-tokenistic, democratic student voice based on reciprocal learning, conceptualised and elaborated by Freire (1970/2005), Fielding (2001, 2015), Mitra (2004), Rudduck & Fielding (2006), Robinson & Taylor (2007), Taylor & Robinson (2009), Biddulph, (2011), Busher (2012) and Czerniawski (2012a, 2012b).

The Learner Profile is critical in shaping internationally-minded students who can contribute to creating a peaceful and better world (IBO, 2013), and it aims to inspire students to communicate, be confident, and find their voice. Yet, as we have learnt, many students in both schools feel that neither they, nor their opinions, (always) matter, which seems to be incongruent with the aspirations of the IB philosophy. Students' voice in an ISc which implements any one of the IB programmes is therefore a domain which needs to be examined further using a critical, creative, multilevel (inclusive of all members who have agency), and multidisciplinary approach - the latter being supported by Lundy's suggestion (2007) to appeal to psychologists, sociologists and educationalists in the debates over the concepts of student voice and children's rights. Student voice, though, cannot be developed without a critical review of the schools' power relations and mechanisms of power in place. One concrete example of this necessity relates to assessments. Whilst reciprocal learning (Freire, 1970/2005, Fielding, 2001) sounds progressive and enriching, it appears contradictory to systems (such as at FASS and BISF) where students' progress is assessed and evaluated by teachers, and never the opposite, and where parental prerogatives and narratives might create demands on students – and schools - which are contradictory to student agency.

Feeling subjected to mechanisms of power

Both schools have implemented over the years - and continue to promote - a series of techniques that foster and maintain a system of students' pastoral organization (discipline and well-being), academic performance, and financial health. These techniques embody Foucault's concept of mechanisms of power (1975/1995), mechanisms that ensure some form of social control and normalization (in schools or other social institutions). The schools' mechanisms of power as well as the IB programme have a formative effect on students' learning and personal development and can be considered as an institutional and socio-cultural tool shaping the students' education and individual growth.

Examples of 'obvious techniques' at FASS or BISF would be the hierarchical organigram, codes of conduct, the faculty's and students' timetables, the allocation and disposition of classrooms, lockers and offices, the allocation and/or creation of rest and study spaces for the students and policies regulating the movements of the students in and outside of school, and during or outside timetabled slots. Other key mechanisms are part of the life of an international school, such as the communication between the school and parents, and the relationship between teachers and students.

Students, on the one hand, feel comfortable with their teachers, appreciate the rapport they have with them, and often feel they can identify with the teachers' 'apparent' struggles, especially at BISF. In effect, students feel honoured and appreciate the trust teachers place in them when the latter share with them complaints about new internal educational reforms or feelings of not being heard. Students then feel on a similar level of power with their teachers. This students' perception is confirmed by members of staff.

On the other hand, students place themselves low on the hierarchy of power. There can be many reasons for this. Students have constant reminders that they must comply with tasks, rules, and obligations. Generally, students need to comply with the schools' mechanisms of power and, most of the time, students are accepting of the need for a structure, because 'adults know better', teachers are 'experts', older, and/or more experienced, and also because of personal and parental drives and dreams. Students have an awareness of where they stand in terms of power. Many perceive power relations as unfair, yet many (and sometimes the same ones) accept the power difference and the authority of the adults, parents and staff. However, as mentioned earlier,

students may be cognitively, yet not sensorially, aware of power relations. This may occur, for example, when power is exercised in situations that embody Weber's concepts of authority (1958), such as when a teacher is known amongst students for their authoritative and charismatic approach, or when students comply with the legitimacy of their school's code of conduct. The data showed that this cognitive type of power relation is mostly integrated when students are the power recipients rather than the power holders, possibly because historically and sociologically students place themselves on the bottom of the power hierarchy. The *knowledge* of the existence of power, thus, even if not felt or experienced in some sensory way by the students, is powerful in and of itself; it is effective over time, and transmitted from group to group. For instance, students at FASS feel closely monitored in several of their classes, know about the teachers' reputation, and they know that they need to arrive on time, not skip classes, and behave, without having to be reminded.

A postmodern systemic reading of the power dynamics in both schools points towards not only the relevance of the complexity of all the schools' parameters and narratives, but also to their interdependence and interactions.

Differences and familiarity

The schools' narratives are enmeshed with the characteristics of an international school. First of all, international schools stand out by their private status, and by the widely-felt perception among stakeholders that parents/families are 'customers'. That perception of being a 'customer' influences the expectations from all sides and this has an impact on the power dynamics. The schools' financial health mostly depends on new admissions and on keeping existing students enrolled. Students and parents intuitively have this knowledge, whether this corresponds to the reality or not. That knowledge becomes power for the students, whether it is biased or not, for they believe that their parents *could* advocate for them towards the school's administrators. Several students expressed this knowledge quite openly and seem to accept the privilege of that power. However, the expectations induced by the private nature of the schools have another non-negligible consequence: As seen earlier, students sometimes put additional pressure on themselves to succeed and not disappoint their parents.

Another 'difference' that is transformed into 'unity and familiarity' is the multicultural aspect of an ISc. Students appreciate attending a school which gives them the opportunity to open their minds to many cultures and languages, and which prepares

them as competent global citizens. Yet, the findings underscored that the synthesis of those ethos and values with exacerbated sensitivities can create intense debates and disappointments; however, school staff can help students manage these disappointments. As previously seen with Hayden and Thompson (2013) who raised concerns about the dominance of the English language in ISCs, I suggest that the dominance of the Anglophone culture (both in the profile of the staff and the IB teaching language) is contradictory to the ‘international philosophy’ of the school and can create issues of communication within families (as with Ju-lieta) and/or between families and school staff. Another point that I raise is that the cultural differences in pedagogic approaches of the administrators can exasperate some students or, on the other hand, be used as leverage in negotiations. Only three students out of eighteen participants were Anglophone (one from the USA, one from the UK, and one from Canada), six were French and there were seven other different nationalities. It was therefore a diverse collection, nearly matching the cultural profiles of both schools. There were clearly cultural differences that were salient in all the participants’ responses, in particular with regards to the parents’ responses to the international school system. This is the case for Iris and Ju-lieta. It was also true in terms of how students such as Léo and Matthieu, coming from the French system, reacted to the nature of an ISC system. Yet it was noticeable that as IB students in an international school, students (whether they be ‘expatriate children’, local youth, or children from bi-cultural families) were eager to espouse and apply the philosophy of the IB through their everyday learning experience. Moreover, it seemed prevalent that most students, if not all, acculturated or were already gradually acculturating to the ‘culture of an international school’, and by extension to the *culture of power* in an international school. Gradually, students develop an ‘alternative culture’, which contains a common and constructed understanding that together shapes a common international culture, based on elaborated power relations.

The schools become, for many expatriate families, a significant support system (occasionally, their sole support system), and this is very much the case for both FASS and BISF. The findings have highlighted that parents and staff become close in both schools. They communicate intensively, parents participate in school events, use the school network as a social hub and as a source of contacts and resources. Teachers and learners grow close. The schools are often referred to as a ‘big family’. The reported familiarity between students and staff increases the likelihood of a smaller power

distance between students and members of staff, and the chance to disinhibit the barriers normally existing between authority figures and students. For students who have seniority in the school, or have the experience of another ISc, the power distance seems to get smaller and smaller the longer they attend the school. As I have illustrated previously, the Power Distance Index (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010, Appendix B) is thought to be small within certain Western societies, such as the USA (PDI: 40), UK (PDI: 35), but this is not the case with others like France (PDI:68) or Asian cultures, such as Singapore (PDI: 74), or South American societies such as Venezuela (PDI: 81), to cite some of the participants' countries.

As students go through the system, they gradually become acculturated to the institutional culture, and learn to reach out to seek help. Paradoxically, the students' acculturation and calibration to the institutional - and host - culture may have possible repercussions within the family. This is especially salient for expatriate families whose everyday lives change dramatically and who may find themselves in a different mode of family functioning, with new intra-family power relationships. Examples were given in terms of the school intrusion of time and space into the family, or in terms of language communication issues. 'Expatriate children' usually have little (if any) say in the family's expatriate move; they leave behind family, friends, routines and familiarity. How do the *children's* experiences then measure up to the feelings and perceptions of the *students'* experiences? As the school becomes a new family for the student, the boundaries between the school and home become more and more blurred. The school becomes a surrogate family, with all the intra-family power dynamics that any 'family' may engender. A combination of familiarity and small power distance lead to the genesis of intra-'family' power relations at a meso-level (the school) which includes dynamics similar to those in a 'regular' family: attachment, acceptance, expectations, disappointments, negotiations, conflicts, power games.

Students have a close yet at times ambiguous rapport with teachers. The study of the hierarchical levels shows that students perceive teachers' power flowing on a similar level to that of the students. Students feel close to their teachers and occasionally identify with their struggles, at times reciprocally; most of the time, the students respect them, reach out for help and guidance and accept the rules. Yet, not unexpectedly, students also resist rules, negotiate deadlines, push boundaries if they find them too rigid, or question them if they find them too ambiguous and intrusive.

The familiarity between teachers and students, the school being used as a support system, the gradual acquisition of assertive skills and independent learning skills, the acceptance of rules can all be understood as mechanisms of power compounding into a web of circulating power forces.

A web of circulating power forces

As theorized in all cited conceptual frameworks of power, whether it be Keltner *et al.*'s (2003), French and Raven's (1959), Raven's (1965, 1993), Lodge and Lynch's (2000), Ball's (2013) or Foucault's (1975/1995, 1982), power is about a rapport between two individuals and/or groups, in any combination in which it may exist. It is counter-intuitive to imagine that power may be understood without such rapport. The students' resistance and their struggles against authority can be understood as developmentally-induced mechanisms taking place between power holders (teachers, administrative leaders, parents) and power recipients (students) and, as seen above, by the power dynamics generated by the ISc/IB parameters. Resistance to authority or to the exercise of power is a form of power in and of itself, and the resistance enables and embodies the student's re-empowerment and growth. Each act of resistance or negotiation is temporary, recurrent, or on-going. The positions of the 'power holder' and 'power recipient' interchange during that process, with both teachers and students having the *knowledge* that the other group may act on this reciprocity at any time. For instance a teacher knows that by giving a deadline, the students might try to dispute or negotiate the deadline. This knowledge of latent power is another important element of the fluid reciprocity of power relations. The complexity of these cognitive, sensorial, perceptive and other psychological reactions and responses suggests a complex fluid circulation of power processes which goes beyond mere linear power reciprocity. Besides the school policies that are in place, families may themselves be driven by the power of their 'customer status' and occasionally attempt to recapture power by reaching out to the administration to express their views, make a complaint, and/or request changes. The 'power recapturing' can also be exercised by the student, the parents, or by both the student and their parents. The school's administration, then informed of these new parental/student propositions, provides responses depending on the school's plans and regulations. It is this constant reciprocity and circularity of power processes that constitute and maintain the school's overall power dynamics. However, the circularity of power does not end at this point: Power is not like a package that is passed on from

one holder to another and back, stripping ‘the other’ of their power. Power is pervasive and is one constituent of the fabric of both continued relationships and perceptions of power throughout the whole school system. In other words, a systemic web of interrelated and interconnected circulation of ‘osmotic’ power relations across the whole school community. Similar to Robinson’s and Taylor’s idea of ‘new culture’ (2007), I believe that the fluid circulation contributes to an overall equilibrium of power dynamics across the three sub-systems. This interweaving of power dynamics constitutes a *culture of power* inherent to international schools, to which students most of the time tend to become gradually acculturated regardless of their past educational experiences, their nationalities, and their socio-economic backgrounds.

At this point, I want to remark upon my use of terms such as ‘osmotic’ and ‘fluid circulation’ which imply that power relations are not isolated but part of an interconnected, flowing systemic fabric of senses, perceptions and experiences. Even the ‘invisible’ power relations are not exempt of power and, metaphorically, could be referred as the ‘*dark matter*’ of power. These are not necessarily observable or felt, yet they may have some influence on parts of the system, and thus on the whole system. In effect, the knowledge of power is omnipresent and is one constituent of that ‘dark matter’. This ‘implicit understanding’, evocative of Foucault’s ‘power and knowledge’, is an element of a pervasive feeling of restraint. It establishes a latent power differential that is very effective in keeping students ‘within the norm’ and inhibiting them from getting ‘too friendly’ with teachers or from resisting too much. One anecdotal (yet telling) example is about the teacher who allows himself to play jokes with students who, in turn, do not authorize themselves to retaliate, for they intuitively perceive that they may not do so. However, for all the circularity and pervasiveness of power that may exist, schools’ administrative teams are the bodies that possess legal, pedagogic, and administrative authority, which theoretically gives them the power to design and implement educational policies. And with power also comes responsibility and accountability to ensure that the educational system in place is serving the needs of its population according to the school’s mission. Therefore, how can schools make meaning of these perceptions of power and integrate them in congruence with their philosophy and mission?

Making meaning

As mentioned earlier, research shows that IB students are more likely to enter four-year colleges and be successful. It also seems as if most FASS and BISF students are happy with their education and motivated to succeed. This study does *not* question the students' potential academic successes nor their potential overall satisfaction in their school. Both FASS and BISF repeatedly fulfil their IB/ECIS/NEASC accreditation criteria in terms of organization, curriculum, child protection, and services. Their DP examination results are excellent⁵. Schools are therefore successful in fulfilling their educative mission. What the study seems to point towards are incongruences and tensions between the implementation of the IB philosophy and the educational practice of each school, raising the question whether, and how, both IB international schools truly reflect the IB philosophy that they chose to embrace.

So why is it important for schools and the IBO to make meaning of the *culture of power*? After all, the IBO welcomes 'critical engagement with challenging ideas' (IBO, 2013- 2015).

I suggest that the IB programme and aims are set and designed outside and independently of the specificities of the highly complex local school environments in which the students are learning. By 'local', I understand elements such as: the socio-economic and diverse socio-cultural profiles of the families; the family and individual emotional narratives and life stories; the schools' management styles; staff peer relationships, cultural biases and life stories; contemporary matters; and the local cultural modes.

Of course, the philosophical approach and educational vision of the IB can be thought of as an adequate and comprehensive kit of values that prepares students to be critically appreciative of all these 'local' difficulties and struggles *as well as* more global challenges.

However, I argue that there are *incongruences* between schools' practices and the IB philosophy; for, paradoxically, the local and the more global complex parameters of an international school render complex the implementation of the IB philosophy. In other words, these ISc parameters misrepresent and enhance the philosophy of an IB programme.

⁵ BISF and FASS DP 2017 and 2018 results were/are about 18% above world average

ISc parameters may *misrepresent* the approach of the IB philosophy when, for example, independent study skills are disrupted by parental hypervigilance or when students are kept out of the communication teachers-parents; or again, according to the students, when students' voice is not developed to the extent that the LP promotes.

ISc parameters may *enhance* the implementation of the IB philosophy when socio-cultural and socio-economic factors might facilitate an assertive voice independently of any IB teaching. As shown earlier, both contexts, misrepresentation and enhancement, can create tension across the three sub-systems. Teachers and students, understandably, are very much aware of potential conflicts and power differentials. As for school managers, they are vigilant about linking their policies to the mission of the school. However, few students - and staff - seem to recognize the pervasive nature of the power dynamics, and few are fully aware of, or at least verbalize, the incongruences between the school practices and the philosophy of the IB programme, and the LP in particular. There is therefore a need to have more IB *philosophy* awareness amongst the school community and a need to reflect on whether the school policies actually impede or promote the IB vision; and if they impede, examine at the meso-level what can be undertaken to facilitate their learning growth.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted in two international schools, one in the USA and one in France. I interviewed eighteen students and nine members of staff across the two schools. Both schools implement the IB DP, a high-quality educational programme that aims to “develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IBO, 2005-2018). The aim of the study was to examine students’ perceptions of power dynamics across the three sub-systems, students, parents, and staff; to explore how the multicultural context and nature of an international school implementing the IB programme impact those dynamics; and finally to explore how members of the school community make meaning of these perceptions. I found that a postmodern systemic reading of these perceptions alerts us not only to the potentialities of complex, fluid and unpredictable students’ responses to power relations, but also to the need to examine the compatibility of the schools’ philosophies with their practices.

In congruence with this postmodern systemic theoretical framework, I conceptualise power as a pervasive force across the three sub-systems and an important element of the fabric of the systemic relationships, either in a latent form or in direct interactions. An array of factors specific to international schools (discipline mechanisms, multicultural backgrounds, private business factors, idiosyncrasies of an expatriate population, etc.) interconnect with individuals’ life stories and cognitive and emotional responses to produce an interdependent web of fluid, interrelated power dynamics that eventually constitutes a *culture of power* unique to international schools.

These power dynamics are not necessarily confrontational or negative. Students come forward with positive ideas, affirmed by a voice that they learn to develop through, for instance, the philosophy of the IB characteristics, the small power distance between staff and students, and their socio-cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 1987, 2000; Vincent, 1996). Often, power relations do not occur without a sense of ambivalence, as the majority of interviewed students recognized the validity and legitimacy of adult power, the sociological place they occupy as young people, their dedication to their studies and their allegiance to their parents.

Certainly, the data highlighted that students have a critical awareness of power relations, in its multitude of forms. Students acknowledge and approve of a hierarchy of power, and accept that adults, teachers and parents, hold more authority, with more opportunities to exercise power over them. However, position and authority do not always signify that students attached *relevance* to those very characteristics. At the same time, students question what they perceive as arbitrary power, or even what they occasionally perceive as an abuse of power. They also may feel that their voice does not matter, is not taken into consideration, and consequently that students do not matter. The meaning of power for many students, besides any developmental explanation one may find, embodies a sense of ownership of their school, reinforced by a feeling of privacy and sense of family *and* familiarity. Their perceptions express the desire to improve the educational systems they are in, for students feel it concerns them directly. Their perception is that students are the main people concerned by school reforms, yet have little power in decision-making. They desire a bigger say in school matters and reforms, in the distribution and completion of homework, in the way the school communicates information, and in the publication of grades. They wish for a better balance of both study and free time, a bigger say in their use of spaces in and around the schools.

Their expression of powerlessness is 'local', in that it reflects their immediate needs, and their family and their school's functioning, yet does not reflect any, or little knowledge of global children's rights. However, whilst students perceive local power differentials, they - and staff members - appear to not intellectually and consciously recognize the potential discrepancies between the IB philosophy and the students' perceptions of powerlessness or the perception of having no, or little voice, which they equate with 'little power'. One reason might be that whilst the IB curriculum is a daily conversation in the students' learning process, the LP attributes are not. ISc characteristics are acknowledged by schools at the time of discrete occurrences, occasional and casual conversations, or professional meetings - such as when cultural biases need to be questioned. However, they do not seem to be part of the schools' pragmatic discourse.

Students do not appear to question the '*whys*' of hierarchies of power relations - that is, they do not fully question the hierarchical order of power; in that, students tend to confirm Dowling's & Osborne's (1985/1994) opinion that a hierarchical structure and rules are needed for children to feel secure. Yet, students are more critical of the

‘*hows*’, and aspire for a better - or different - redistribution of power in their respective schools. However, for schools to start examining processes of power across the three main sub-systems, they first need to develop some sense, some awareness of an ISc *culture of power*, regardless of whether or not the students’ aspirations for more power are feasible, or considered as being worthy - or not - by the schools’ leaderships. As to the IBO, it needs to introduce into its mission an insight into the international schools’ *culture of power*: that is, an awareness of the interdependence of all ISc parameters and of their impact on students’ learning and school life. This will not only benefit their programme, but especially will subsequently serve the needs of the students and their families.

In reality, it is the responsibility of all the stakeholders to revisit the current educational practices, policies and theories, and to reflect as to how the IBO and all the different members of the school community can foster and facilitate the pragmatic congruence between the IB philosophy and the school practices (see Appendix H where I list actions that stakeholders - IBO, schools, parents, students - could take to implement changes). I suggest in the next sections how the IBO, then the schools, parents and finally students can contribute to establish that congruence, and what this implies in terms of student voice and agency.

First, the IBO needs to reflect on how to embrace the characteristics of international schools, and in particular the ISc *culture of power*, in order to facilitate a more judicious and pragmatic application of the IBO philosophy. The IB philosophical theory is ‘generically’ internationally-minded yet not ISc-specific. ISc/IB schools are consequently implementing a programme which happens to not be ISc specific. Because all ISCs are different yet share many similar parameters, it is essential for the IB programme to reach out to parents in a way that is ‘IB formative’ yet respectful of school individualities and cultural differences.

One of the first directions to consider could be to examine how parents could be more meaningfully engaged in understanding the IB philosophy. A substantial amount of information is accessible to parents on the IBO website. Nevertheless, more could be facilitated by the IBO in terms of providing parents with more meaningful, more contextual and ‘hands-on’ information through workshops, training sessions, parents’ IB certification, focus groups and parents’ blogs. Informed and/or trained parents - thus empowered parents - could then make this information more accessible to other parents

in their own school, or in their own language. Parents who may have disconnected from the IB for various reasons (such as language or work commitments) would in turn become more engaged in their child's programme. Parents who are over-involved in their child's education might feel more supported and become more knowledgeable about the philosophy of the IB and independent learning skills, and be more inclined to hear their child's needs in an informed way and then share the impact of the programme with other families. This 'parent component' would not be prescriptive nor mandatory, yet should be promoted for more visibility and efficacy over time.

Another direction the IBO could take involves the link between student voice and the IB philosophy, including the Learner Profile. Attributes such as 'Communicators', 'Risk-takers', 'Carers' and 'Thinkers', not only convey attributes needed for student voice, but also reflect a pedagogical orientation. Yet, the term 'student voice' does not systematically appear in IB language. There should therefore be more research into student voice and the practical application of the IB (philosophy, curriculum, and pastoral matters). Directions to explore might include how to provide more opportunities for student agency such as, but not exclusively, through institutionalized student feedback to the IBO, participation in the designing of programmes, and more flexibility and adaptability in the students' choice of school-based individual IB programmes. Finally, IBO-based research could explore how LP attributes could be more precise in including skills that refer to the development of one's sense of self, such as assertiveness, resilience and self-confidence.

Second, schools need to reflect on how their identity as an international school can pragmatically enhance the IB philosophy and programme. They need to recognize the *culture of power* in their schools, acknowledge and respond to power dynamics in a fear-free and non-threatening manner for students, parents, and teachers. The circulation of power dynamics, part of that *culture of power*, can be considered, after all, as 'normal' and formative.

Recognizing an ISc *culture of power* and examining the school's power dynamics would be part of an introspective and formative process towards a new culture of learning. Concretely, one important area that administrative teams need to address is the *relevance and pedagogy* of students' voice in their own schools and in particular within the context of the IB programme. If assessed as relevant, they need to agree to what degree it should be achieved both in decision-making processes and content. If

students are to be included in some of the decision-making and in the provision of a structured and strategic tool to creatively implement changes, then schools need to decide how and when they should include them in the process of change, and which pedagogical and philosophical value they attach to that concept. Pragmatic arguments in favour of a greater students' voice include the argument that the *concept* of students' voice is represented through most of the Learner Profile, and therefore in need of a clearer visibility and application. If IB learners are to develop 'all of the LP attributes' as well as the values attached to these attributes, then it seems logical that students should actually become more aware of these attributes, and learn to develop those attributes through concrete opportunities.

Another important area of introspection for schools is students' autonomy of learning, or at least the process of gaining independent learning skills. The study has shown that local context can disrupt, transform, or accentuate the educational theory. In an attempt to increase students' performance, and supported by ISc parameters, both parents and staff 'collude' in gradually increasing the monitoring of their child and student. On the one hand, the ISc *culture of power* empowers students to grow more independent, while, on the other hand, students occasionally feel over-controlled. Schools need to become aware of the potential power dynamics created by the interlacing between the IB and ISc components with an awareness of the impact it may have on the students' education and well-being. Schools need to reconcile how to lead students towards more learning independence while being accountable to parents and responding to their needs and expectations. Parallely, schools need to not let students lose themselves in the process, especially for students who are not developmentally, culturally, emotionally or academically prepared to develop competence in independent learning. School staff should in effect consider the potential tensions or issues arising from the involvement of parents on the students' school lives – even if tension or conflicts are normal occurrences in schools.

Parental involvement, as was seen earlier, is dependent upon and motivated by the family narratives, whether it be related to their socio-economic status or their personal life stories (cultural origins, educational experiences, medical factors etc.). The students' attitudes toward work, and their stress levels and perceptions of power are directly impacted by the family narratives. So, whilst parents are naturally supportive of their child's IB education, schools need to find a way to reflect on the *why and how* of parental intervention in an ISc, and on the quantity and quality of communication

between staff and parents, as they both have an impact on the students/children's well-being and learning. Working on a par with the IBO and facilitating a comprehensive IB informative and language appropriate process for parents might contribute towards that aim. It would be valuable for schools to understand that each AoP (although not defined in those terms by the schools) needs to not be considered separate from or independent of one another, but understood as part of an interacting system in which each part has a role and an impact on the other. This recognition may help members of the schools' staff better understand the impact of the IB programme on international students' personal, family, and school lives, and reciprocally, and provide them with integrated emotional support and academic guidance.

Third, parents have their own role to play in implementing positive actions and change. What could parents do, and what do they need to know to support their child, and/or relieve any potential conflicts they might encounter in front of potential misconceptions or misunderstandings about the IB programme? What approach could they take when confronted with their child's, or their own anxieties due to local stresses without encroaching upon their child's desire for more autonomy? Much could be said in terms of parenting approaches in the context of an ISc/IB education and this specific focus goes beyond the scope of this paper. However, students' perceptions seem to indicate that parents need to adapt to their child's school and feel integrated and informed, yet not overwhelmed, to better respond to their child's school needs.

Last but not least, students have their own agency to develop. If much of this agency is paradoxically promoted and facilitated by adults, students hold their own responsibility to empower themselves and self-advocate. During the interviews, students asked for more recognition, more opportunities to exercise their voice, less-arbitrary decisions, more control over their time and space. Students need to fashion a compromise between a desire for more independence, more voice, less control, a desire to be structured, and the schools' responsibilities and IB regulations. However, and not exclusively, they should revisit the different genres of voice they potentially possess, and the power they may be exercising without necessarily feeling they do. As seen earlier, students' voice is embodied in different ways. It would be (re)empowering for students to examine all these different ways in which they can already express their

opinions, be heard, and make choices; then they could use this as a basis to self-advocate towards more ISc - IB philosophy congruence.

Limitations and recommendations for further research

This study targeted a student population from G10 and G11. I analysed their perceptions of power dynamics, and this gave me one representation from which I conceptualized an ISc *culture of power*, and remarked upon a dissonance between ISc parameters and the IB philosophy. However, there were limitations to this study. First, there was a limitation to the choice of two year groups, in that a wider selection of ages may have provided a more complete representation, with different ways to consider power relations. Second, linked to the sample, another limitation was the unbalanced gender distribution. Whilst I chose to not impose gender parity and to respect the sample as it unfolded, the male/female unbalanced ratio may have had an impact on the data. Third, the sample size was limited, and in particular for the FASS sample. Whilst the ratio of sample/year group number of students was similar in both schools (roughly 10%), the absolute number of FASS participants was small (four). Fourth, there was an ethical issue related to my own status of past and current counsellor respectively at FASS and BISF. Lastly, my analysis especially focused on the power relations *in a school*, taking into consideration parental factors; yet not analysing as thoroughly the power relations *at home*, taking into consideration school factors. My choice was to conduct a student-centred research. Yet it soon became obvious that power is everywhere and systemically affects all realms of the students' school life - and school functioning in general. It therefore did not highlight and shed light on the parents' reactions (and strategies, as mentioned in an earlier study, Leclerc, 2015) which themselves might have given a more elaborated background and causal links to the students' responses to power relations. One way to address these limitations and test my model of an 'ISc/IB *culture of power*', would be to consider studies in schools where I do not have any professional connections, trying to respect parity, collecting the perceptions of the complete spectrum of the school community (parents, teachers, staff, governing body, and students), and analysing the meaning of power within each and across the different sub-systems, and examine how they interact.

This study raised other areas of research that would be pertinent to examine further using either a sociological or psychological lens. I initially limited the interviews to

three domains (homework, communication, time and space), and it would be useful to undertake a study open to more domains such as peer relations and staff relations. This might point towards different interpretations of power relations, different hierarchies and representations of the AoP.

There was an indication in the data that students from different cultures (with varied PD indices), different socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds gradually get relatively accustomed and acculturated to the ISc *culture of power*. I wonder about the ‘permanence’ of such an impact, and how (or whether) such an international environment can provide the contexts to disrupt, at least temporarily, the ‘family cultural capital’, which would align with Mills’s views on Bourdieu’s transformative potential of cultural capital and habitus mentioned earlier (Mills, 2008). A longitudinal study of the impact of the acculturation of students from different cultures, in its most generic sense, would perhaps shed light on this question. Then, for researchers who would be more inclined to use a psychological approach, it would be pertinent to examine the defence mechanisms attached to those power dynamics or explore more specifically the correlation between the tensions highlighted in this study and students’ well-being and development.

Developing the awareness of an ISc *culture of power* is relevant to the ISc sector *as a whole*. It is relevant in business terms, in terms of the image that ISCs project. More importantly, such a reflection would contribute in enriching the ISc sector’s educational debates: that is, examining how ISCs can reconcile their financial, global, socio-economic and socio-cultural prerogatives with their philosophical mission and a leading-edge educational vision. However, this study may be relevant to all schools, whether they be international, independent, faith- or state-supported. Any school deemed to have its own *culture of power* may grow from revisiting the congruence between their educational goals - and philosophy - and the school’s own AoP.

Illuminating the meaning and role of power in schools is of value for individuals’ growth and the growth of the institutions. Ultimately, international schools aim at preparing students to become responsible global citizens, to contribute to developing a more peaceful world, and to take actions to manage a complex world. At the University of Washington’s Commencement in June 2018, Dr Ben Danielson planned to “inspire people about the power that they have to be important change agents in the world”⁶.

⁶ <https://www.washington.edu/news/2018/03/27/distinguished-pediatrician-dr-benjamin-danielson-to-be-uws-2018-commencement-speaker/>

Beyond individual enterprise, this aspiration commends the power and also the responsibility of all schools, and in particular those that promote global citizenship, in an era that witnesses more and more ISc/IB schools being opened over the globe with the overarching goal of shaping our future generations.

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APPENDIX A – Excerpts from the Convention on the Rights of the Child ⁷

Part I:

Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.
3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform to the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Article 5

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

⁷ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx> (OHCHR, 1996-2018a)

APPENDIX B – Power Distance Index based on Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov (2010) -

Key Differences between Small- and Large- Power Distance Societies in Schools

SMALL POWER DISTANCE	LARGE POWER DISTANCE
Parents treat children as equals	Parents teach children obedience
Children treat parents and older relatives as equals	Respect for parents and older relatives is a basic and lifelong virtue
Student-centred education	Teacher-centred education
Students treat teachers as equals	Students give teachers respect, even outside class
Hierarchy means inequality of roles, established for convenience	Hierarchy means existential inequality
Teachers expect initiatives from students in class	Teachers should take all initiatives in class
Teachers are experts who transfer impersonal truths	Teachers are gurus who transfer personal wisdom
Quality of learning depends on two-way communication and excellence of students	Quality of learning depends on excellence of the teacher

Power Distance for participants' countries (based on three items in the IBM Database Plus Extensions), from 0 (small PD), to 100 (large PD). The larger the PDI, the higher the rank.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (participants)	PDI	Global Rank
Venezuela	81	10-11
Singapore	74	19
Slovenia	71	21
Bulgaria	70	22-25
France	68	27-29
Pakistan	55	48
Trinidad	46	54
Luxembourg	40	59-61
USA	40	59-61
Canada	38	62
Germany	35	65-67
UK	35	65-67

Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010). *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind*. Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival. 3rd Ed. London: McGraw-Hill, pp. 55-88
<https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html>

APPENDIX B (bis)– Individualism Index based on Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov (2010) -

Key Differences Between Individualist And Collectivist Cultures in Schools

INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
Students do not hesitate to speak up in class	Teachers from an individualist culture might feel that students do not speak up in class
Students do not hesitate to speak up in large groups	Hesitation to speak up decreases in smaller groups
Confrontations and conflicts are welcome	Confrontations and conflicts should be avoided
Students expect to be treated as individuals	Students expect to be treated as part of an in-group
	Focus on adapting the student to skills necessary to be a group member

IDV for participants' countries (based on three items in the IBM Database Plus Extensions). The larger the IDV, the higher the rank:

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (participants)	IDV	Global Rank
USA	91	1
UK	89	3
Canada	80	4-6
France	71	13-14
Germany	67	19
Luxembourg	35	23-26
Bulgaria	30	48-50
Slovenia	27	51-53
Singapore	20	58-63
Trinidad	16	67-68
Pakistan	14	70-71
Venezuela	13	73

Hofstede, G. *et al.* (2010). *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind*. Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival. 3rd Ed. London: McGraw-Hill, pp. 89-119.
<https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html>

APPENDIX C – Questions for staff interviews

HEAD OF SCHOOL

- What would you say is the school's philosophy with regards to the involvement of students in school policies, protocols and/or the school functioning in general?
- What are the educational areas where students should (*never*) be involved in school policies and protocols? How is this justified? Do you feel that the way it is happening at your school is congruent with the school's educational philosophy?
- What would you say is the school's philosophy with regards to the involvement of parents in school policies, protocols and the school functioning in general? What are the educational areas where parents should (*never*) be involved in school policies and protocols? Is this currently happening in school? Do you feel that the way it is happening at here is congruent with the school's educational philosophy?
- What/when are the times when you feel that parents have power over the school as a system? (Give examples)
- How would you define power in a school, and what are the different levels of power at school?
- How do you think the school's power / authority over the whole school community (parents, staff, students) is perceived by students themselves?
- Does the fact that the school is an international school change the power dynamics?
- Do you think that the school mirrors outside societal power and cultural classifications and differences?
- Do you think that the school contributes to reinforce those differences?
- With regards to this, in what way would an international school be any different from any other school?

SECONDARY SCHOOL DIRECTOR (SSD)/ DEPUTY-HEAD 'PASTORAL'/DP CO

- What is the school system for homework distribution and homework completion?
- Are there school expectations of parents' involvement in their child's homework? What are they?
- How does the school communicate with parents on homework matters?
- What is the school system for attendance and ensuring punctuality?
- Are there school expectations of parents' involvement in promoting/controlling their child's attendance and punctuality? What are they?
- How does the school communicate with parents on these matters?
- What is the school system for ensuring the students' safety?
- What is the impact of these 'safety' protocols on the students' daily routine?
- How much does the school involve students in the implementation of the school policies on these matters (do they have a say?)
- To what extent do students empower themselves at school? How?
- How much would you say that the school and parents work together to ensure homework completion, appropriate attendance and punctuality and students' safety?
- When would you say that the school and parents have together and/or separately some decision-making power/influence over the students? (Give examples)
- When would you say that the school and students have together and/or separately some decision-making power over the parents? (Give examples)
- When would you say that students and parents have together and/or separately some power over the school? (Give examples)
- How do you think the students perceive this 'empowerment'?
- How does the school ensure the students' safety and well-being?
- What would you say is the hierarchy of power levels at school?
- What are the goals of the IB programme?
- What is your vision of autonomy in school?
- How do you reconcile the teaching of independent skills with an intense communication with parents?
- What is the role of communication at school?
- What can you say about the transmission of content vs transmission of skills?

ADMISSIONS

- What is the ratio French families / International families in school?
- What are the reasons usually given by French families to apply to the school?
- Are there any ex-espatriate French families?
- What are the reasons usually given by international families to apply to the school?
- What are the elements that families really like about the school when they come to visit? (Think geography, location, programme, system, etc.)
- Does it happen that prospective students give different reasons to apply to the school than their parents? What are their expectations? Or, what are the parts of the school that usually students like about their prospective school? Are they usually different from their parents'?
- Have you ever felt that prospective parents tried to exert some power over the school during the process of admissions? For what reason?
- Do prospective parents sometimes ask about the relationship School-Home? Are they interested in anything in particular?
- Do prospective students sometimes ask about how much parents are involved in their education here at school?

APPENDIX D – Questions for student interviews

HOMEWORK DISTRIBUTION AND COMPLETION /INDEPENDENT LEARNING

How do you think homework is organized at school?

Why is the school giving homework? Is it necessary?

Do your parents get involved in your homework? How? How much? What do you think of it?

Where do you do your homework? How have you decided on this? Is it imposed by school? Your parents? Yourself?

Is it source of conflict? Are you impacted by this? How do you negotiate the space?

Do you feel you have a voice in the way homework is implemented? If so, why and how? If not, why and how?

How do your parents and school communicate about homework? How do you feel impacted by this communication?

Should your parents be informed if you do not do your homework?

How much of your time do you feel is impacted by homework? How do you negotiate the time (When, how much)?

Do you feel free or constrained in terms of time, and if constrained, how do you manage this constraint?

Do you feel that the fact that your school is international has an impact on quantity and control of homework?

How independent are you in your work?

Do you feel teachers give you too many guidelines, not enough, just right?

Are your parents monitoring you too much? Not enough? Just right?

Any comments about the IB?

Parental Involvement

What do you think of the role of parents (in general)?

What do you think of parental involvement (in general), and your parents' involvement? Should they be more, or less involved? Or is it just right?

Do you feel you are part of the relationship 'teachers-parents'? How?

Do you feel excluded? When? How?

COMMUNICATION

How do you think communication is organized between your parents and school?

What is your perception of the communication between your parents and your school?

What do you feel is the purpose of the communication system?

How do your parents and school communicate about homework?

How do your parents and school communicate about grades?

How do you feel that the school communicate with your parents?:

Not enough? Enough? Too much? Do you gain something? Do you lose something? Explain.

Do you feel free or constrained by the system in place?

What is your contribution in the communication system?

What would be a good system?

What is the impact of language in the school communication?

PLACE / SPACE / TIME

What is the place you feel most at home (at home, at school, in-between). Explain

Who do you feel the school belongs to? Explain

Are there any specific spaces that 'belong' more to students? How is this decided?

Do you see the school and home as two separate entities, or do you see them as interrelated/ interdependent?

How do you experience home/school boundaries?

What are the constraints and limitations in school re: time and space?
How do you perceive the use of space at school? How is it controlled?
How are they impacting your personal space and time, and your school space and time?
How do you use the 'in-between' spaces?

Attendance and punctuality

How do you get to school? How do you consider the time between home and school?
Do you tend to be on time? Late?
How do your parents get involved in your time schedule/punctuality etc.?
Do you sometimes skip classes, and why? Do your parents know about it? If so, what do they do about it? Should they be informed?
Do you feel free or constrained in terms of space?

Security/safety

What does the school do to ensure your safety in terms of moving around school?
Are you aware of limits within which you belong to the school 'as a student'?
Are these limits 'limiting', and how? Do you feel them as constraints?
Do you think there are too many limits? What would you change?
Do you feel reassured by these limits/boundaries?
How are they impacting your movements?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT POWER

Do you feel there is a hierarchy of power in the school, and how is it organized? Do you think that students have a lot of power in school? How?
How do you feel power? What is power for you? How would you define it? Authority?
How do you feel your parents would reply to those questions? Same for your teachers.
What is the purpose of a hierarchy?
What/who gives power? How is it kept/given/taken?
What are the different kinds of power in school? Do you 'see' all the power?
How do you think students feel/exercise/reclaim power? What are the different ways power is exercised?
Do you experience any constraints? How do you experience protocols?
How do you negotiate, bypass or circumvent constraints, rules and exercise of power in general?
Do you feel that students have a voice? Where and when can you express your voice?

International

In what way would an international school be different from a public school in terms of power distribution and implementation?
...in terms of discipline?
How do you experience the cross-cultural aspect of school?
Does it create any issues? Which ones?
Is there any cultural power?
In what way do you attribute your feelings and perceptions about power to an international school?

Motivational question

Why have you chosen to participate?

APPENDIX E – The IB Learner Profile
(from ‘The IB Learner Profile’, IBO, 2010)

“The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools [... that] can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.”

As IB learners [students] strive to be:

INQUIRERS:

[As students] we nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE:

[As students] we develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS:

[As students] we use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS:

[As students] we express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED:

[As students] we act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED:

[As students] we critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING:

[As students] we show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS:

[As students] we approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED:

[As students] we understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE:

[As students] we thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

APPENDIX F – CREATIVE, ACTIVITY and SERVICE (CAS), THEORY OF
KNOWLEDGE (TOK) and EXTENDED ESSAY (EE) –
Based on the International Baccalaureate Organisation, ibo.org.

1. CAS

CAS is one element of the IB DP programme. There are three strands:

Creativity – arts and experiences that involve creative thinking.

Activity – physical activities.

Service – unpaid and voluntary.

“To demonstrate these concepts, students [need to] undertake a CAS Project. The project challenges students to: show initiative; demonstrate perseverance; and develop skills such as collaboration, problem solving and decision making.”

<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/creativity-activity-and-service/>

2. TOK

“Theory of Knowledge asks students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and how we know what we know. It is assessed through a [...] presentation and an essay.”

It provides students with the opportunity to “reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge”, as well as make them “aware of themselves as thinkers.”

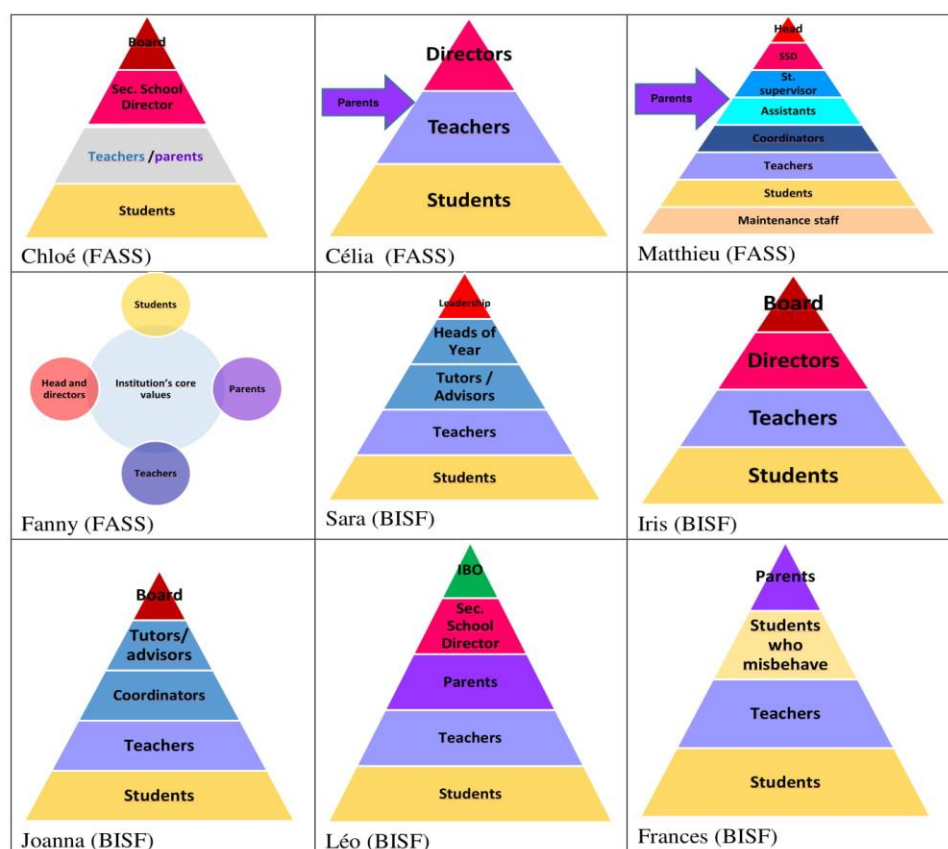
<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/theory-of-knowledge/>

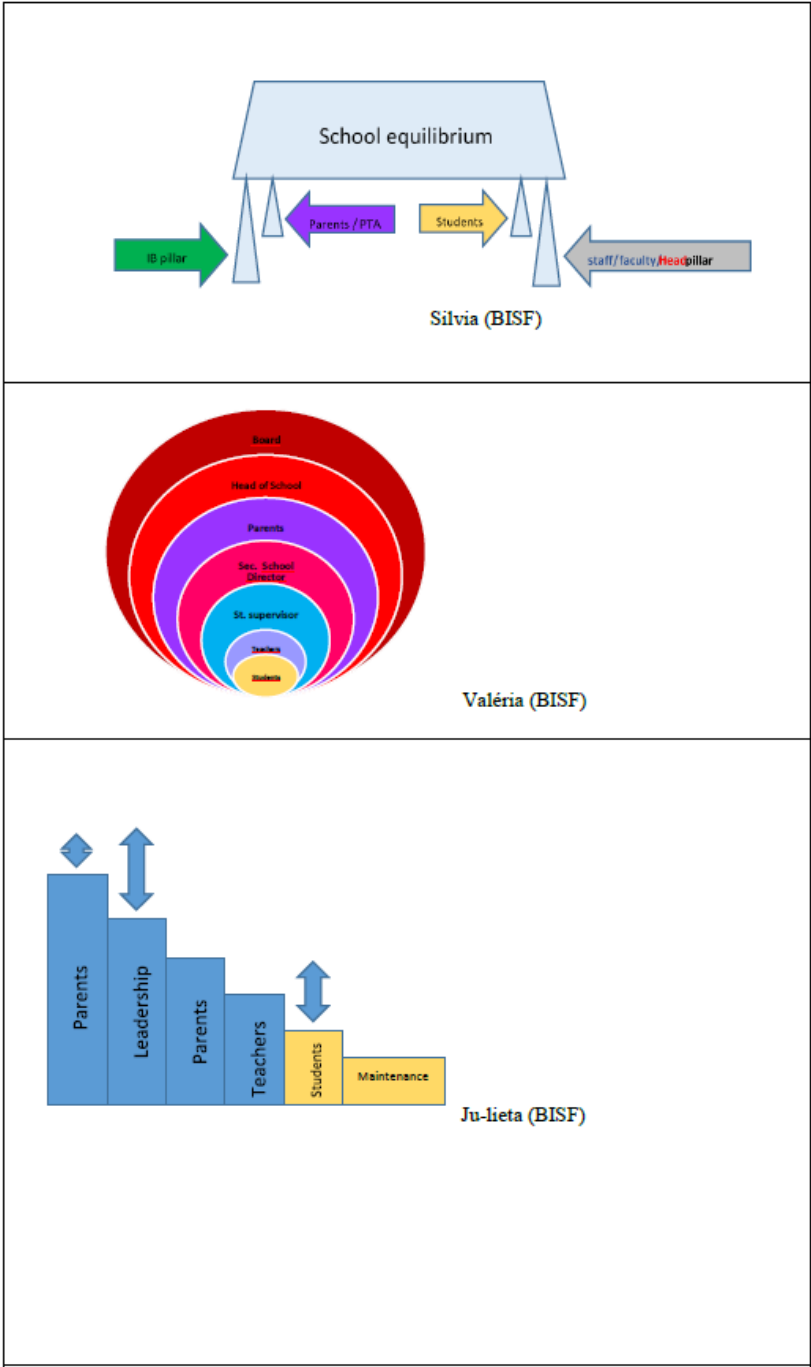
3. EE

“The extended essay is an independent, self-directed piece of research, finishing with a 4,000 word paper”. The EE provides students with, amongst other objectives, an opportunity to “engage in a personal exploration of [a] topic, and prepares them for ‘undergraduate research’”.

<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/extended-essay/what-is-the-extended-essay>

APPENDIX G – Hierarchical Levels of Power (perceived by students)





APPENDIX H – The ISc culture of power – Examples of actions

Stakeholders / agents of change	Action
IBO	<p>Commits to the involvement of parents in a more pragmatic way, providing parents with more meaningful and hands-on information (workshops, training sessions, focus groups, and certification).</p> <p>Examines the possibility to provide space for more students' agency, such as (but not limited to) through institutionalized student feedback to the IBO, participation in the designing of programmes, and more flexibility and adaptability in the students' choice of school-based individual IB programmes.</p>
Parents	<p>Develop interest in getting to know the IB philosophy from their child's perspective.</p> <p>Develop an interest in sharing new IB knowledge.</p> <p>Organize themselves in the view of sharing that knowledge (in workshops, meetings, café mornings, etc.).</p> <p>Participate in parenting skills, stress management / acculturation / integration workshops.</p>
Schools	<p>Examine the relevance of developing a system where students' voice is an integral and authentic part of student life, integrating a culture of learning based on reciprocal teaching/learning.</p> <p>Create positions of responsibility to support such a system.</p> <p>Examine coherence of school practice with IB philosophy.</p> <p>Place emphasis on LP holistic education at DP level.</p> <p>Implement change including student-staff committees to review students' main claims, propositions and areas of resistance and negotiation (focus groups, etc.).</p> <p>Enable students to get involved in the curriculum, pastoral and homework policies (choice of assignments, assessment protocols, standardization of deadlines, peer committees, etc.).</p> <p>Enable participation in staff interviews, strategic plan meetings, accreditations.</p> <p>Regulate the communication between parents, students and staff.</p> <p>Facilitate collaborative decision-making with students.</p> <p>Enable the participation of students on the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Enable a more effective and representative SC system.</p>

	<p>Facilitate the possibility to offer a more flexible choice of DP options.</p> <p>Enable a system of workshops in schools for parents, organized by both parents and staff.</p>
Students	<p>Contribute to the ‘culture of learning’.</p> <p>Strive to develop skills that enable them to develop agency.</p> <p>Reflect on the different genres of voice / power they exercise.</p> <p>Commit to their individual growth and that of the group, as much and as appropriately as they can.</p> <p>Participate in choosing assignments and fixing criteria⁸</p> <p>Participate in focus groups for homework policies (distribution and completion)</p> <p>Participate in staff interviews, strategic plans and accreditations</p> <p>Have a representative on the Board of Trustees</p>

⁸ <http://blogs.ibo.org/blog/2017/05/25/education-is-not-the-learning-of-facts-but-the-training-of-the-mind-to-think/>

APPENDIX I – Tables and Figures

	TABLES	FIGURES
1	Staff participants	Triangular model of power relations
2	Student participants	Flower-petal representation of AoP
3	Themes	
4	Admissions data	
5	Heads and SSDs visions of student voice and PI	
6	Mechanisms of power	
7	Components and skills of the IB programme	
8	IB coordinators	

APPENDIX J – Coding samples (student transcripts, colour codes)

Handwritten notes with color-coded circles and text:

- P** Physical space where students feel / take control / belong to
- S** " " " teachers / school take control
- T** Constraints / limits (et contestation) / discipline
- Less constraining / more freedom -
- Students dictating PI / PI
- S** Power (Voice) taken to student -
- P** Power taken by parent -
- PF** Power felt
- S** Students appreciating / teachers' structure and control -
- H** " " " homework -
- T** Students / Negotiate with teachers / reclaiming
- P** " " " parents / interview
- R** Reclaiming / feeling independent / autonomous -
- F** Students / Reclaiming 'autonomy' by parents -
- JB** Autonomie and JB
- PC** Complicity (parent - child) + alliance
- PS** " (parent - school)
- SS** " (students - school)
- ST** " " - teachers
- Communicat (School parents / School students) → Parents / students
- International (business)
- " cultural
- Hierarchy / Flexible
- School shaping student?

Additional notes and diagrams:

- B** Boundaries
- C** (circled)
- Power defined
- Time = Space

APPENDIX J(bis) - Coding samples (student transcripts, annotations, p.32)

8 3 2

S More involved, but also, I am very communicative. They are not involved. They could be 0 involved if I let them. They are not involved, but when I feel like they should be, I communicate to them, and then they remember. My dad has, you know is very busy, and my mother is less busy, and still has her project, so I do understand, but I do wish they were more involved.

R So, what is it you would like them to do?

S More involved in my university choices, or in my future choices, so for example, a very precise example, I still don't know whether I want to do my SATs or not. I don't think I want to... Because they don't want me to go to America, which I totally understand, but, you know, just being more questioning, and challenging me to think more, yeah...for my future plans.

R So, you got more too much responsibility yourself on the decisions of your schooling and studies...

S I am given so much freedom... But I make sure not to, I tell them, hey we need to just sit down, and we need to have that conversation...

R So, it's the exact opposite of err, some students feel like parents are controlling them too much, and they find ways to renegotiate and reclaim territory, for you, it's the opposite

S I think, it's a balance. I think that they have less control over my education life, but they have more control over my personal life...

R Which would be another study but...So we have done the homework... So, how do you negotiate your time, in terms of the homework? How does it impact your home life...? Do you feel like it has a huge impact?

S Absolutely. Homework is a huge, the thing with BIS is either you get no homework, or so much at the same time... And it depends on the amount of ... if your family want to go on the trip for the long week-end... Precisely now in the present day, we have so many "ponto"; so, so you just can't do what the family does, because of too much homework...

R So the system impacts your organisation of family life by taking a lot of time... Would you say that homework belongs to school or home?

S Belongs to school, depends so much on school, they decide when, where, how much, what, you know...

R Do you think it's done on purpose to get to your home life?

S I think so... They have good intentions, but I mean it's personal, maybe I procrastinate, and do it at the end, or maybe I spread it and organize it, and it does not affect the family life...

R How do you reclaim your own home space...

S By either not doing it, or by organising myself, and saying ok I will do in my free time, and I won't stay in the CR and go to the library and study for it.

R (What) is the school controlling your home time and personal time? Do have any power at all?

S It is homework, and it is given to me, so I have the entire choice to do it or not. Hum. Choice by saying like reality choice... I am the one doing the homework.

R You have consequences if you don't do it.

S You decide if you want to take the risk or not... It's about finding the balance.

Annotations:
 - "I understand" (pink dot)
 - "Parade" (circled)
 - "Balance again" (circled)
 - "Common parent/child" (green dot)
 - "Priority boundaries" (circled)
 - "School responsibility into home life" (circled)
 - "Balance" (circled)
 - "Choices options" (circled)
 - "1/8" (bottom right)

APPENDIX J(bis) – Coding samples (student transcripts, annotations, p.41)

41

PC

Q S I feel like, the students are like, sometimes, the teachers sometimes can be... (Rires), sometimes teachers need help... Sometimes, there are some cases, my mom sometimes, even my mom, wants to complain about teachers.

R What do you mean "they need help"?

S Sometimes they are, the teachers are like, really not teaching, just give us hard tasks, or being unfair in class; Then the parents need to get involved, if the whole class has problems with a teacher, then the parents need to get involved. But like, for like, for unnecessary things.

R Ok. You feel like some students expect the parents to...

S To solve their problems, or to have the school change things. My mom knows that I don't complain to her, because she would say "go and do something about it yourself".

R So, it's really the child's intervention first. The students get involved.

S Yes. The parents become the last resource, if there is sometimes.

R That's more like the students and the parents trying to change something of the school, rather than the parents and the school trying to change you. What about you, the student and the school, do you feel that together, you are an entity, and the parents are separate, and you have maybe power together against what parents might think?

S But like, that never really happened to me. My parents try everything to agree... There is no really conflict.

R Let's see, hum. What would you say all the different ways, and this school in particular as an international school, that the school can control students' lives, direct you, make decisions that you can't do anything about? In your experience?

S In a way, sometimes they make us do things outside of class that have a big impact. The whole class doing field trips, voluntary work. Even if we don't want to do it, it opens our mind, to make us better people. The school has that power. It's up to you if you want to do extra stuff, but sometimes they make us do extra stuff, even if we don't want to.

R So, extra-curricular activities.

S Yes, that's a way to control us. Sports... This school, there are not really big about sports. In the school I used to go, it makes used to be better socialising.

R What about the use of space in the school? Is it regulated in any way?

S The school could have more space for students. Breaks, for example. You could go to F.'s corner... You can't go. I understand it's not safe to be outside, but it's really ~~the~~ the only place you can go. In that case, do a place inside for us. They have two sofas for the whole school for our breaks. We need more space, if they don't want us outside.

R Do you think there is any intention? Power can be exercised unconsciously... That's the way it happens because there are limitations of space. Or do you think there is a limitation to control your use of space.

S It's kind of both. I think there is nothing they can do for the limitation, but they also do not want us to go somewhere, because they don't want us to go somewhere else.

Power by proxy

Boundaries -

Invisible power - space manipulation

Requires/ advice brought of parental involvement in school ed. almost hesitant to admit to need to in power ed - or change teacher's ways -

Parents seen as last resource

Transformation of powerlessness into power

Boundaries being crossed

School extending into traditionally non-curricular line → experienced but → learning as intrusion (sometimes appreciated)

recognise that some boundaries that are being crossed in beneficial way

Power felt exercised indirectly by pre-emptively taking away element that could give more freedom to students → Not fully financial issue → Reduces choice of options to establish constraints - phys. space

APPENDIX J(bis) – Coding samples (student transcripts, annotations, p.42)

42 ✓

Difficult years to exercise power

Time

R In terms of time, how does the school control the use of your time? Attendance, punctuality? How do they control where you are? Do you get the perception that your time is limited in some way?

S Yes, of course, I get tardies if I am late in class. They have policies, but I also think that they have big power in controlling our time in giving homework, even though we are not in school. Homework is a kind of way to control our time. In school, they control through attendance, and schedules. But also homework is a way to control our time even though we are not in school.

Intentional boundaries

R Do you think it's intentional? A pedagogical decision? What's your perspective as ...

S I feel it's kind of intentional. Some teachers know we take a long time to do. They could be more understanding.

R Can you think of anything that students do in a forum, where they can express their views?

S The school have the SC. It's really good, you can go to the students, and the student will talk to the teachers. It's important to have that going on.

R Does it work?

S I don't really know whether it works that much. There was a teacher that was complaining about PSE. She got heard. So, it can work.

R Can you think of a system where you could have more decision-making? You say 'we do need to be forced to do things'. At the same time, you express your views that you would like to not be forced to be given less homework, more space. Can you think of a system?

S I think like a SC and homeroom is enough. If I were to add something; I would tell teachers to be more open about it. You can always talk to those teachers. The classroom teachers need to be more open about it. At teachers always talk about Math. They should be open to what students say for example about the way they teach, the way kids understand, the homework they give etc.

R Thank you very much.

Students expressing their views → Not necessarily as a "given", or as a participative system but more so as a reactive system -

Can't really think of a system → difficult to be creative and get away from the traditional format -

No evidence that it's intentional is that the teachers still give the work even though they know that it takes a long time to do → hence it's intentional -

*System offered is an empathic system - 8
where power is not distributed*

*Seen as intentional
educationally based?
OR
motivated on purpose for sake of winning power!*

APPENDIX J(bis) – Coding samples (student transcripts, annotations, p.53)

53

Transcript StuBis 6 *Maia* (sang pp60-61)

R What is the place, err, that you feel the most at home? The place around here where you feel the most at home, think big, everywhere.

S Hum, I think that probably is with my friends in a café. At school, it's school, and at my house, it's not my home, we are renting the place, and when we are in a café, we talk, we socialize... it takes my mind of where we are, especially as it is in English. So, I feel safe. *feeling home = feeling safe & familiar*

R What you are saying is that feeling home is feeling safe...

S Yeah...

R Is this around school? Between home and school, where is it?

S Probably somewhere near home... We tend to go to the same cafés, the one in front of my house, the P... Café. It feels like home... *illusion of home*

R You are saying, because you are renting...

S I feel safe in there, but it's something new, that I have to adapt, and I have only been here for 3 months...

R In the café, you say you feel safe... When you are in that place, do you feel that you are in control of that place, the amount of time you spend there? *being/feeling in control*

S Yes, I can stay as long as I want, I can leave when I want... If I am not feeling like it, I just don't go... It's something we usually get a coffee together with my friends... *don't move!*

R It becomes familiar?

S Yes exactly.

R Friends from school?

S Yes

R Talking about school... You know, who do you think the school belongs to? To the students? To the teachers? Other levels? People? Adults?

S Probably it belongs to other levels, because as much as I agree with the rules, because, err, there must be, it's not like if I can control what's going on, and I don't have any control, and the teachers are just like teachers... The curriculum is not really theirs, I feel it belongs to higher levels... *Accepting levels because 'can't'*

R Would you say that it's the other levels, and we will talk about that later, you say they control the rest... Is controlling belonging?

S Yes, belonging is imposing the rules, it's controlling...

R So let's say for students to feel the school belongs to them, they would have to have more control of what they do... *to this reciprocal?*

S Yes, I think so.

R Is there any space in the school, and it could be in any building, in-between buildings, is there any space for you where you feel more safe? The most comfortable?

sense of ownership → authorized to feel in control →
→ feeling in control → feels ownership

Thinking that teachers have not much more power

APPENDIX J(bis)– Coding samples (student transcripts, annotations, p.158)

158

R You feel more in control here. What makes you say that?

Q? S In some ways, the students here don't respect authority as much as they did in my old school, so if a teacher gives too much hw, they'd say 'we have too much hw, we can't do this', if we hand an assignment late, the teacher might forgive them, 'I understand you were busy', whilst in my old school, if you handed a thing just an hour late, you got C'ed, and you lost 30 points on the assignment. So, there is definitely, sometimes I felt it was really unfair, we weren't able to communicate with the teachers as much, and there was not as much personal relationship, but in some ways, I kind of miss that, because students here get mollycoddled, or get too close to the teacher, you don't maintain like, a school atmosphere. I mean I am someone who appreciate who, like, like sort of school life... When I am at home, I can read and relax in my bedroom, but when I am here I work. I think that in some classes, like in my Chemistry, sometimes we have pizza on Fridays, and we don't do anything that day. Our parents say that it's a waste. There is definitely a more relaxed atmosphere and the students are more heard, but at the same time, it might be less rigorous.

R When you say they are more heard, you mean they are more considered as more equal as teachers, or more heard, if they say 'I want another week to do my work', they are going to get it, or they have a voice? What did you mean?

Q? S I guess, at the school, the student is the customer, and the teachers are aware of that. If students are unhappy, then the parents are unhappy, and then they'll complain, and the teacher will have to change. Because it's a business, and the student is the customer, there are more of an elevated level and compared to teachers at the school.

R You feel from the students' perspective, this is what I might hear from adults, but not necessarily from students. You are saying that the students feel also that they are the customer. And therefore that gives them the power to negotiate, or reclaim maybe some authority...

Q? S Especially if the parents are donors to the school. I definitely noticed that if students are on the Board, and whose parents are big donors, they get treated differently. In my class, there is a boy, he is allowed to use his laptop, and no-one else. Everyone says it's because his parents are on the Board. There are definitely financial elements to power dynamics on the school.

R Interesting point of view for a student to say that. Talk about this hierarchy of power a bit, I am going to suggest a model, but you don't have to follow that model, and you can certainly propose another one. What would you say the hierarchy of power of levels his in this school? You said it changes, but what would you say at the bottom, at the top, or do you have a different model to offer?

S I think that the power in the school ultimately is secular (?). So, if a teacher is giving too much hw, there is a lot of grade deflation in the class. The student notices it, tells their parents, the parents tell the head of school, who is the boss of the teachers, and they get into trouble. I think that, and then maybe if a student misbehaves, the teacher notices, it goes the other way, the teacher tells the head, and the head tells the parents and it gets back to the student. But I think that's quite a good thing. I actually appreciate that at the school...

R The communication?

S Because there hasn't been, a lot of communication at the school I was at before. You almost felt helpless in front of the teachers. One teacher just disliked me, and you know, people have favourite... But hum, it just made that year very hard for me because I could not complain to the teacher. She was tenured, like the principal does not really talk to the teachers, the parents don't

Handwritten annotations:

- None flexible in expectation performance*
- School's family*
- Here's too family - single -*
- Less a school atmosphere*
- School is a business*
- parents*
- perspective of diff. treatment depending on Board parents*
- must get props*
- Parents & Head of School*
- standard aware of teacher's tenure - purpose of power*

APPENDIX J(ter) – Conceptual themes

	Situations, ideas, perceptions, concepts and narratives	Themes
1	Student Council and homeroom Receptive and empathic system Direct communication / speaking out Power by proxy	Students' voice
2	Visibility Porosity Expectations Porosity between sub-systems Homework Ambivalence Societal role Rules and discipline Too much communication	Boundaries home-school
3	Emotional / psychological component Business component Too much communication, too much transparency? Language Academics Use of cultural arguments Life values Parental skills	Communication home-school-students
4	Policies, protocols Constraints, rules Proposing ideas Expressing one's voice Providing feedback Attendance, punctuality Assessing, reporting Boundaries Parallel form of power Invisibility Reclaiming power Power by proxy Keeping in the dark	Different ways to exercise power
5	Wanting to be informed Procrastinating Negotiating deadlines Avoiding work Communicating with teachers Laid-back attitude Misbehaving Refusing to comply Bypassing orders Claiming power	I reclaim, I negotiate, I avoid, I resist
6	Trusting the system Parental attachment Complying Accepting authority Accepting hierarchies of power	I trust you, I accept
7	Ambivalence Wanting/needing parents' help (options, homework, 'against' management, etc.)	I want my parents to be involved
8	No homework done Communication	Let me know first
9	Parents-school alliances	Paradoxical power

	Monitoring homework Triad	
10	Appealing to parents Direct intervention of parents Appealing to French culture Appealing to IBO	Power by proxy
11	Claiming spaces Territoriality	Power games between students
12	Public territory -> Personal territory Strategies Paradoxes Feeling at/ recreating home (seniority, active agent, safety, being in control) School belongs to students	Territory / Territoriality / ownership and control of space
13	Rapport and hierarchy Evaluation and assessment Inspection and accreditation Visibility Power and capacity of change Power and popularity Presence and participation Perceiving hierarchies Levels of hierarchy are flexible Parental pressure School pressure Sense of control Exercise of power can be arbitrary and unfair Students disempowered Social control Consequences Age, experience, expertise, personality Seniority (students') Illusion of power Power as a vehicle, means, an end in itself Power as positive change Collective power	What power means / Perceptions of power / powerlessness
14	Between home and school Between buildings	Power in the 'in-between'
15	IB mission Academic tasks Parental education Feeling over-monitored/ over-controlled by parents Feeling over-controlled by teachers Ambivalence Difficulty to cope More autonomy when older Able to self-regulate Balancing work and study	Autonomy
16	Conflicts of interest (teachers and students)	Dual roles
17	French schools Rules for safety Time and space control Struggling against authority	I can't do this, I can't do that
18	Students appreciate the structure Students respect authority	I don't like rules, but I do
19	Rules Academic tasks Homework Time and space constraints Safety/security constraints	Constraints and tasks
20	Parent-child complicity	Alliances

	Business as power Teachers-students Management-parents Students-students Familiarity Closeness between different members of the school	
21	Well-being ‘Business’ power Accountability Students ‘shaped’ by school Internal motivation Invisible power / knowledge of power	Importance / strength of power
22	Cultural biases Cultural schemas Cultural disagreements International mindedness / global worldview Students appreciating diversity No knowledge of system Cultural shock Expatriate life Parental power Different educational systems Use of cultural arguments Cultural power Security Socio-economic factors Socio-cultural elements IB programme School culture	International elements
24	Perception of ‘abuse of power’ Fear, narratives Feeling over-controlled by parents and/or teachers Feeling not structured enough Cultural adjustments Expatriate life Feeling unheard Different kind of stress and pressure Students not believing in their voice Balancing work and study Feeling powerless / powerful Developmental transitions Family narratives Individual narratives Bio-psycho-social factors Empathy Defence mechanisms Sense of self Ethical issues	Emotions/psychology, expression and interpretation

APPENDIX K - Information package for FASS and BISF students

Ed D. RBT Research Study
January 2016



REC Reference Number: KCL /15/16-REMAS ID 2367

INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENTS ■■■

Dear student! Hello... My name is Mme Leclerc, and as you know, I work at your school as the School Counselor. I am currently preparing my final doctoral thesis on the relationship between schools, students' parents and students. To complete my research, I need to hear students' perspectives! *However, the participation in this study is voluntary; you have no obligation to participate.*

Title of my Thesis: Perceptions of power dynamics between home and an international school: The impact on students' personal spaces and their social worlds.

Why am I asking students questions?



Your opinion is essential for this study! I will interview some of the school's staff for general background information. However, the thesis is specifically about students' perceptions, thoughts and feelings.

What is this project about?



In a nutshell, it is a study to try to understand how the relationship between the school and your parents impacts:

1. The way you envision school life and undertake school work.
2. The way you feel about your sense of place and time.

For this study, I am especially interested in what 10th and 11th Graders think of, and perceive the way a school and parents interact, or work together to educate them and keep them safe.

What are the main areas of study?



I am especially interested in hearing students' perspectives on four specific areas of school life: Homework; attendance; communication and safety.

What will happen in the interview?



I will be asking you a few questions like these:

- ✓ How do you think homework is organized at school?
- ✓ How do your parents get involved with your homework? And what do you think of it?
- ✓ Where do you do homework? How have you decided on this?
- ✓ How do you get to school?
- ✓ What does that time between home and school represent for you?
- ✓ What is the place where you feel the most 'at home'? Who do you think the school belongs to, and what makes you say that?
- ✓ What do you feel about the role of parents at school in general, and in this school in particular?

Each interview will last about 45 mins, and will be tape-recorded if you agree. I will use your information for my study, but never your name. Recordings will be deleted after transcription. All personal information will remain confidential, unless I need to disclose it if I have any concerns about your wellbeing. I will explain this to you before the interview. You can also contact me about this and about any other point at any time.

And also.....If you like....



You may also want to bring a piece of writing, a poem, a painting that represents your sense of place, your sense of belonging and ownership, your feelings about your relationship with school, what school life represents for you, the place your parents take in your school life, etc.

This creative piece may also be something you have done in the past and you might want to share.

It is not mandatory to bring in a creative piece. This is only if you want to.

Those creative pieces would be used as a support to describe your feelings further, or as a way to illustrate a point you would like to make.

With your permission, I will take a photograph of your creative piece, or use an excerpt of your writing for my final thesis.

Do I need your parents'/guardians' consent for you to participate?



Yes, if you are under 16.
No, if you are over 16.
However, all parents will also receive an information package so that they may get to know the research project. They may want to discuss this with you.

What will you do with what I tell you?



I will compare and analyse what is said, and may feed back the findings to the school in an anonymous way. Your identity will be protected. Findings may be ultimately published in a journal.

Should you decide to participate in this study, you would still be able to withdraw from the study at any time until April 30th, 2016, and without giving a reason.

Further information

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact the researcher using the following contact details:

REGINE LECLERC
regine.leclerc@kcl.ac.uk

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr JENNY DRISCOLL
Researcher's supervisor
jenny.driscoll@kcl.ac.uk
Lecturer
Education & Professional Studies
King's College London
Waterloo Bridge Wing
Franklin-Wilkins Building
Waterloo Road
London
SE1 9NH
England

APPENDIX K(bis) - Information package for BISF parents and guardians

Ed D. RBT Research Study
January 2016

REC Reference Number: **KCL /15/16-REMAS ID 2367**



INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS - ■

Title of the Research Based Thesis: Perceptions of power dynamics between home and an international school: The impact on students' personal spaces and their social worlds.

Why are you receiving this information sheet?

You are the parents or guardians of a child who may participate in a post-graduate research study which will lead to a research-based thesis, final part towards a doctorate of Education. Your child, like any other Grade 10 and 11 student, has received an email from the researcher explaining the study. Whilst you may not necessarily need to consent to the study if your child is over 16 years of age, the researcher kindly requests you take time to read the following information carefully. Please feel free to discuss it with your child. *There is no obligation for your child to participate in this study.*

Research aims

The aim of this study is to examine how students in an international IB (International Baccalaureate) school perceive and negotiate power dynamics at play across the different social worlds (home, school, other spaces) that are parts of their everyday lives.

Why are you receiving this information sheet?

Your child will only participate if he/she wants to; and for students who are under-16 years of age, only if they and you consent to the study. Your child will be able to withdraw from the study at any time until April, 30th, 2016, and without giving a reason. If your child decides to withdraw, all data will be destroyed and not used.

The researcher is currently a postgraduate researcher at King's College London, UK, and is the School Counselor at the International School of Paris. The researcher is therefore potentially known by many Grade 10 and Grade 11 students and their families. The researcher wishes to assert that the research as described above is separate from her work at ISP. For any child to decide to, or not to participate in the study is not to affect the child's current and future treatment at school in any way.

Background information: Research with students

The study targets Grade 10 Middle Years Program and Grade 11 Diploma students. Data collection will take place using semi-structured interviews and narrative interviewing.

The purpose of these interviews is:

- a. To get an insight into students' perceptions of power dynamics at play between home and school;
- b. To examine how students negotiate these power dynamics.

Should your child/children agree to take part, the study will probably take place at school, in the researcher's office, unless your child prefers the interview to take place at home, as long as one of their parents/guardians is at home.

Each student interview should not exceed 45 minutes. Students will be invited to reflect on power dynamics focusing more especially on four domains: Homework, communication, attendance and safety.

They will also be invited to create a new, or bring in an existing creative product that represents or expresses their feelings related to their perceived power dynamics. This creativity option is not prescriptive, and would constitute a base for further discussion. Interviews will be recorded, subject to your child's permission and your permission for under 16 students. Recordings of interviews will be deleted upon transcription. Creative products will be photographed and/or copied with the student's permission, and the originals returned to their owner.

Your child can decide to not answer any question that he/she does not wish to answer. If your child agrees to take part, the child and you will be asked whether you are happy to be contacted about participation in future studies. Their participation in this study will not be affected should you choose not to be re-contacted. If your child decides to take part and/or if you consent to their taking part, you child will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form (included in this information package). For any child under 16, your consent for interviewing your child is also needed. If relevant, please find the space to authorize the researcher to interview your child in the consent form below.

For your information, the information leaflet for your children is attached to this form.

Confidentiality

Data collected will be dealt with in total confidentiality and anonymity. No external agency will be used to transcribe data. As part of the presentation of the final data and analysis, your child's own words may be used in anonymised text form. All information will be coded, and neither your child (nor your family) will be identifiable from what may be reported.

Data collected from children will be equally dealt with in total confidentiality and anonymity within the limits of the local legal laws related to duty to warn. Children/young people will be informed that what they say will remain confidential unless they disclose that they are at risk of or being subject to harm and/or self-harm.

Possible benefits of the study

Parents have their own educational values, and schools have their own educational philosophy and agenda. How these collide, collude and interact, and how these dynamics impact and serve students (or not) is the subject of this study. A study exploring the power dynamics between home and school is relevant as it may help teachers, administrators and counselors in understanding what serves students best (and ultimately families and teachers). Findings may be ultimately published in a journal.

Further information

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact the researcher using the following contact details:

REGINE LECLERC
regine.leclerc@kcl.ac.uk

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr JENNY DRISCOLL
Researcher's supervisor
jenny.driscoll@kcl.ac.uk
Lecturer
Education & Professional Studies
King's College London
Waterloo Bridge Wing
Franklin-Wilkins Building
Waterloo Road
London
SE1 9NH
England

King's College London - Research Ethics
2012/2013/1

APPENDIX K(ter) - Information package for BISF Admin staff

Ed D. RBT Research Study
January 2016

REC Reference Number:



INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS – ■■■ SCHOOL ADMIN STAFF (Upper School Director; Academic Director; IB director; Admissions Director)

Title of the Research Based Thesis: Perceptions of power dynamics between home and an international school: The impact on students' personal spaces and their social worlds.

Why are you receiving this information sheet?

You are respectfully invited to participate in this postgraduate research project as a participant, and provider of background information. Before you decide whether you want to participate in this research study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. The researcher kindly requests you take time to read the following information carefully. *However, the participation in this study is voluntary; you have no obligation to participate.*

Research aims

The aim of this study is to examine how students in an international IB (International Baccalaureate) school perceive and negotiate power dynamics at play across their different social worlds (home, school, other spaces) that are parts of their everyday lives.

Research with yourselves

Data collection will take place through electronic communication and face-to-face structured interviews with Admissions staff and administrative staff: Upper School Director; IB Director; Academic Director.

The purpose of these structured interviews is:

- a. To collect information regarding statistics (percentage of French/international students, parents' rationale for applying to the school, etc.);
- b. To collect information regarding distribution of homework, home-school agreements, attendance and punctuality, and communication processes between home and School.

Interviews should not exceed 30 minutes. Interviews will be recorded, subject to your permission. Recordings of interviews will be deleted upon transcription.

Background information: Research with students

The study targets Grades 10 and 11 Upper School students. Data collection will take place using semi-structured interviews, and narrative interviewing.

The purpose of these interviews is:

- a. To get an insight into students' perceptions of power dynamics at play between home and school;
- b. To examine how students negotiate these power dynamics.

Each student interview should not exceed 45 minutes. Students will be invited to reflect on power dynamics focusing more especially on four domains: Homework, communication, attendance and safety.

They will also be invited to create a new, or bring in an existing, creative product that represents or expresses their feelings related to their perceived power dynamics. This create process is not prescriptive, and may constitute a base for further discussion.

King's College London - Research Ethics
2012/2013/1

Confidentiality

The data collected from staff members will be dealt with in total confidentiality and anonymity. No external agency will be used to transcribe data. As part of the presentation of the final data and analysis, participants' own words may be used in anonymized text form. All information will be coded, and participants will not be identifiable.

Faculty will be referred to by their title, not by name.

Data collected from children will be equally dealt with in total confidentiality and anonymity within the limits of the local legal laws related to duty to warn, self-harm, harm to others and from others. This means that the students will be clearly informed that what they say during their interviews will remain confidential unless they disclose that they are at risk of harm or self-harm.

Possible benefits of the study

Parents have their own educational values, and schools have their own educational philosophy and agenda. How these collide and interact, and how these dynamics impact and serve students (or not) is the subject of this study. A study exploring the power dynamics between home and school is relevant as it may help teachers, administrators and counselors in understanding what serves students best (and ultimately families and teachers).

You will be offered a copy of the final thesis should you wish.

Further information

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact the researcher using the following contact details:

REGINE LECLERC

regine.leclerc@kcl.ac.uk

If this study has harmed you in any way, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr JENNY DRISCOLL
Researcher's supervisor

jenny.driscoll@kcl.ac.uk

Lecturer
Education & Professional Studies
King's College London
Waterloo Bridge Wing
Franklin-Wilkins Building
Waterloo Road
London
SE1 9NH
England

Title of Study: Perceptions of power dynamics between home and an international school: The impact on students' personal spaces and their social worlds.

I _____ agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction. I agree to become a participant of the study. I have read the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date

APPENDIX L – Participants consent form

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES - Students

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.



Title of Study: The Impact of International Relocation on Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref.: KCL /15/16-REMAS ID 2367

Thank you for reading the information sheet and considering taking part in this research. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Please
initial

- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researcher involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason.
- I consent to the processing of personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the UK Data Protection Act 1998.
- I consent to being interviewed.

☐☐☐

Please complete as relevant and appropriate:

- I agree to be contacted in the future by the researcher to participate in follow up studies to this project, or in future studies of a similar nature.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- I agree that the research team may use my data for future research and understand that any such use of data would be reviewed and approved by a research ethics committee. (In such cases, as with this project, data would not be identifiable in any report).

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- *If applicable:* I consent to my creative piece to be photographed.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- *If applicable:* I consent to excerpts from my creative piece of writing to be included in the researcher's final report.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- *If applicable:* I agree to the findings being published

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


Participant's Statement:

I _____ agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date

Appendix M – Ethics Committee acceptance letter (LRS -15/16-2367)

<p>Research Ethics Office</p>	<p>Franklin Wilkins Building 3.9 Waterloo Bridge Wing Waterloo Road London SE1 8UH Telephone 020 7848 4000/4070/4077 reo@kcl.ac.uk</p>	
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Regine Leclerc
9 Passage Legrand
Boulogne-Billancourt
92100
France

1 February 2016

Dear Regine

LRS-15/16-2367 - Perceptions of power dynamics between home and an international school: The impact on students' personal spaces and their social worlds.

Thank you for submitting your application for the above project. I am pleased to inform you that your application has now been approved with the provisos indicated at the end of this letter. All changes must be made before data collection commences. The Committee does not need to see evidence of these changes, however supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students implement any requested changes before data collection commences.

Please ensure that you follow all relevant guidance as laid out in the King's College London *Guidelines on Good Practice in Academic Research*:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/assets/files/research/good%20practice%20Sept%2009%20FINAL.pdf>

Ethical approval has been granted for a period of **one year** from 1 February 2016. You will not be sent a reminder when your approval has lapsed and if you require an extension you should complete a modification request, details of which can be found here:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/applications/modifications.aspx>

Any unforeseen ethical problems arising during the course of the project should be reported to the panel Chair, via the Research Ethics Office.

Please note that we may, for the purposes of audit, contact you to ascertain the status of your research.

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

E&M Research Ethics Panel REP Reviewer

Major Issues (will require substantial consideration by the applicant before approval can be granted)

Minor issues related to application (the reviewer should identify the relevant section number before each comment)

Minor issues related to recruitment documents

Please add a specific date to all **consent forms** whereby participants will not be able to withdraw their data.

Gatekeeper/Adult participants' **information sheet** – please stress the voluntary nature of participating or granting permission for the research to go ahead. Please add a specific date at which point withdrawal of data will be impossible.

Student participants' **information sheet**. Please stress the voluntary nature of participation and their ability to withdraw from the study at any point. Please specify a date at which withdrawal of their data will not be possible.

****As you have offered to share the findings of the study with the schools, please also consider how using the titles of faculty members might lead to an identification of the individual participants. You should discuss this issue with your supervisor.**

Advice and Comments (do not have to be adhered to, but may help to improve the research)

Page 1 of 2